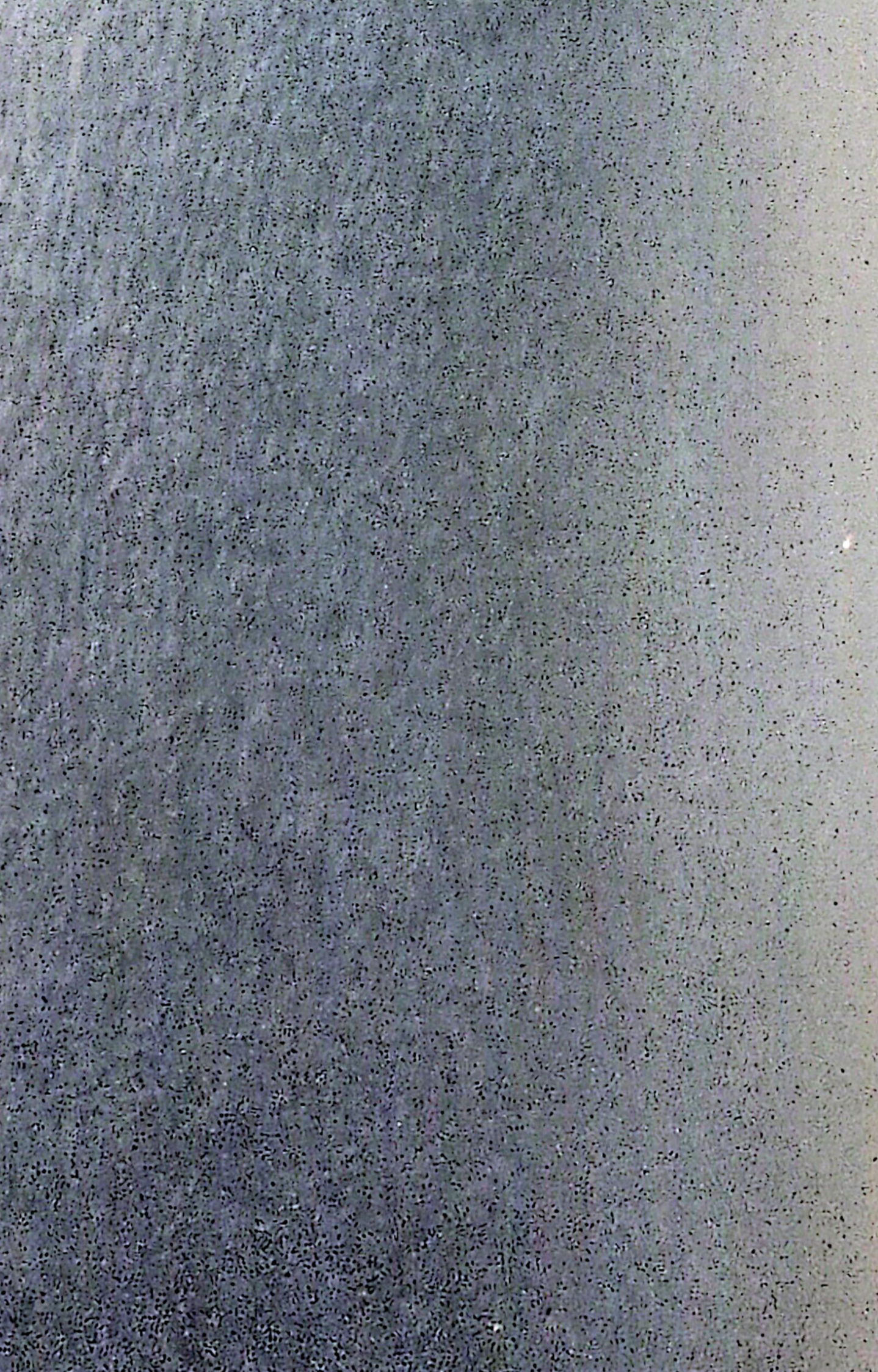


5.25
THE DIWAN OF ABU TAYYIB
AHMAD IBN AL HUSAIN AL
MUTANABBI

A. Wormhoudt



The Diwan
of
Abu Tayyib Ahmad ibn al Husain al Mutanabbī

translated from the text of

Abu al Hasan Ali ibn Ahmad al Wahidi al Naisaburi
(d. 468/1075)

by

Arthur Wormhoudt

William Penn College
1971

COPYRIGHT, 1971 BY
ARTHUR L. WORMHOUDT
PRINTED IN THE U. S. A.

FOREWORD

The longer poems in the Diwan are called *qasidas*. They have a three part structure which consists of an opening section called the *nasib*. In it the poet thinks of himself as a lover abandoned by his departed mistress while he complains at the deserted campsite or tell. The middle section is called *rehla*. It describes the journey of the poet to his patron. The final section is called *madih*. In it the poet praises his patron. This pattern undergoes considerable variation but it will be useful for the reader to keep it in mind as he reads the longer poems.

Each poem is made up of couplets which are self-contained in meaning. Often each half of the couplet is self-contained. The whole poem has a monorhyme which repeats the same sound from beginning to end. Sometimes this is true for the half lines. There are as many as sixteen different meters and each can be varied.

The Diwan as a whole is divided into five sections as listed in the Table of Contents. The first two were written for patrons who resided in Syria. The middle one was written for patrons in Egypt. The last two were written for patrons residing in Persia.

In addition to the commentary of al Wahidi, I have consulted the commentaries of al Ukbari (d. 616/1219), al Yaziji (d. 1871), Sadir, and al Barquqi. I also wish to thank Mr. Khairy Sharif, a native of Hebron, Jordan, and Mr. Iskandar Shabo, a native of Kameshli, Syria, along with those mentioned in my earlier translation from the poems of al Mutanabbi in 1968.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	
Shawmiyyat	1
Saifiyyat	107
Misriyyat	182
Amidiyyat	216
Adudiyyat	222
Notes	236

SHAWMIYYAT

- 1 Abu Tayyib Ahmad ibn al Husain al Mutanabbi was born at Kufa in Kinda in the year 303 A.H. and grew up in Syria and the desert. And he spoke verses in his youth. These are among the first verses that he spoke in his youth. (5)

Love wastes my body terribly on a day of parting
The flight has scared sleep from my eyelids
Breath comes and goes in this toothpick so that
As wind blows clothes from it, it doesn't show
Sufficient emaciation for my body! I am a man who
But for my speech with you, you would not see.

- 2 He spoke also these in his youth impromptu. (6)

My father! he was one I loved and we parted
But Allah decided after that to unite us
And so we parted a year and when we met
His greeting to me was a farewell.

- 3 He spoke also in his youth praising Muhammad ibn Ubaid Allah the Alawi. (6)

Welcome to a camp whose soft one captured you
Gone are its virgins who went away from you
You remained there gathered around a liver
Well-cooked, its hand over its thin cover
O drivers of her camel, thus I think to myself,
I shall be found dead before I lose her
Stop a little with her for me, even if I am
Not nourished by the least bit of a glance
In the heart of the lover is the fire of love 5
The hottest fire of hell is cooler than it
The parting of his locks has greyed from flight
Their black has become like white damask
They went on with the soft woman whose flanks
Almost when she arose seemed to make her sit
A tall woman whose lips are of the darkest red
A fine woman who is whitest when disrobed
O you who blame lovers, leave these people alone
Allah led them astray, how can you guide them?
For reproof has no influence on aspirations 10

The closer you are the farther you are
 Wretched nights when I was awake in my emotion
 Longing for him who spent them sleeping
 I lived through them and tears relieved me
 Their channels and darkness relieved them
 My camel does not take on an extra rider nor
 Do I urge her on with a whip on racing days
 A shoestrap is her saddle, the sandal tongue
 Her bridle, and shoestring her lead rope
 The hardest blow of the wind is outdistanced 15
 Beneath me, in her stepping she goes slowly
 Over the back of what seems a shield joined to
 The hollow of a like shield to make hills
 They are flinging us onward to Ibn Ubaid Allah
 Both its valleys and its rough places
 To the young man who comes back with lances
 He waters them their drinking in hearts
 He has gifts for me that make a precedent
 I count some but I cannot make a census
 He makes gifts and his delay does not spoil them 20
 Nor by it does his favor diminish in them
 Best of the Quraish as to father, most glorious
 Greatest of them in giving and most generous
 Most piercing with spear and most slashing
 With the sword, their chief who leads them
 Most chivalrous when he rides and longest armed
 When he shakes hands, their raider, their Cid
 He is the crown of Luway ibn Ghalib and in him
 The branches spread for them and the roots
 The sun that strikes them and moon of their night 25
 The pearl of their necklace and their topaz
 O would that I might suffer such a scar for them
 As was allotted to him who is their Muhammad
 He left a trace upon it and on the iron but
 The Indian steel does not impress his face
 It was happy when it saw that it was adorned
 With such as him and that wounds envied it
 Men became sure that he who planted this
 By craft in his heart would harvest from it
 The jealous come to light and they themselves 30
 His fear brings down and he sets them up
 The scabbard weeps over the blade of the sword
 When he warns it that he is unsheathing it
 It is her experience that it will become bloody
 And that he will sheathe it in the necks
 He sets it free and the enemy due to terror
 Condemns it but the faithful praise it
 The fire is flashed from its concussion
 Gushing blood from necks extinguishes it
 When a warrior loses his heart's blood 35
 One day their edges will inform of it
 These people have agreed with me that you
 O son of the prophet, are unique among them

And you, when you were just coming of age,
 Were an elder of Ma'ad though of their youths
 How many and how many are the splendid graces
 You nurtured after they were born from you
 How many, many needs you have been generous to
 Their promises were nearer to me than myself
 Many a fine coat comes on feet of benevolence 40
 Arriving at my residence again and again
 He delights my skin with them for my sake nor
 Will I be able to disown them until death
 Come back with them so I will never lack them
 The best of fine gifts is their returning.

4 Someone said to him when he was in a bookshop: How
 fine this hair is! So he said. (15)

Locks are not fine until they are seen
 With the braids undone on the day of battle
 On a youth grasping the short lance and
 Giving it drink from all with full beards.

5 He spoke in his youth as he passed two men who had
 just killed a rat and they were showing him as the
 people wondered at the size of him. (16)

The raiding rat has come to light
 Death has bound him down to ruin
 Kinany and Aamir have aimed at him
 Pursued him in the way Arabs do
 Both of the men were near to the killing
 Which of you plunders the goodly spoil?
 Which of you was closest behind him
 For he has tooth marks on his tail!

6 He spoke also in his youth mocking the Qadi al
 Dhahabi. (17)

When you were pedigreed you were a fatherless son
 You were tested and had no recourse to culture
 You were named al Dhahabi on the day of naming
 Derived from "loss of wits" not from "golden one"
 Surnamed with you O not you named by it, too bad!
 O nickname dumped on top of the surname!

7 He spoke also praising a man who wanted him to re-
 veal his origin. (17)

Leave me, anxiety taught me, alas, your blame
 Painfully arising in the starless breast
 And the ghost of a body love has not left
 Either flesh or blood since illness wastes it
 And throbbing heart which if you saw its flame
 You would suspect it, O heavens, to be hell
 Then a cloud on the mountain side of love flashed
 Leaving the sweetness of every love bitter
 O face of shrewd Dahiya, if it were not for you 5
 Languor would not eat my body or crush bones
 If consolation has enriched her then indeed
 I am impoverished due to her and my love
 A sapling growing on a double desert hillock
 The sun of day that bears the dark of night
 These contrasts did not unite in seeming likeness
 Except to make of me the booty of affliction
 Like the qualities of our unique Abu Fadl which
 Overcome, so he endows his poets and he quiets
 He gives to you first of all and if you press him 10
 He gives with excuses like one who has sinned
 He looks at pride so that it seems to be low
 He sees humility as if it were greatness
 He preserves a good action from delay as if
 He thought the request for a gift improper
 O king who is made as pure as a jewel by Him
 Who has the kingdom, highest of the highest
 A light is manifested in you that is divine
 Almost you know wisdom not to be known
 Its purpose is in you when you speak eloquently 15
 In every limb of you to make an utterance
 I have understanding yet I feel that I am asleep
 But who dreams of Allah as I am dreaming?
 The eyes grow large in me until it is certain
 To these eyes that they are led into error
 O he, by the bounty of gifts from his wealth, is
 Revenge that returns as mercy for the orphan
 So that mankind says: This is not intelligent.
 And the treasury says: This is not Muslim.
 Memory of such as you is my neglect of it 20
 Since one needs no interpreter for what I want.

8 He spoke also in his youth. (21)

O friends of my staying, what of your edge
 Free of wounds, innocent of death?
 I see in my temper a fragment of its steel
 Thirst to strike skulls in thirst for honing
 The green of life's garment is in freshness that
 Shows you red death in the ants' tracks
 Cease from any comparison of me with like and as
 For no one is above me and none like me

Leave that to me along with my horse and spear
 Let us be one raid on men and let them see my act.

9 He spoke also in his youth. (23)

How long will you go in the dress of a pilgrim
 Until when in misery and how many years?
 If you do not die under the swords generously
 Die and suffer basely without nobility
 So jump, trusting in Allah, in a leap of glory
 Seeing death in battle, honeycomb in mouth.

10 He spoke in his youth in Syria praising Abdullah the
 Kilabi. (24)

I live and the easiest I suffered is what kills
 But parting oppressed my weakness unjustly
 Longing increases as distance grows ever greater
 Patience wears thin in my body as it wastes
 Except for the departure of the beloved the fates
 Would not find themselves a way to our souls
 By a magic in your eyes giving me mortal illness
 One loves life but if you block it, then not
 If he does not grow old yet his lover grows gray 5
 With age and if solace lends color it fades
 Insane with love, if it were not that a perfume
 Visits him on an east wind he could not be sane
 So look on or think of me whom you know in flames
 One not tasting a look at her for it escaped
 Perhaps the Emir sees my shame and intercedes
 With her who left my love to make me a proverb
 I am sure that Sa'id will seek revenge for me
 When I see him with his lance held ready
 I surely cannot count the favors of his father 10
 Gifts like Zuhail beside my gift of limning him
 A great lord whose seat is Manbij and whose gifts
 On horizons seek those who do not ask for them
 A moon at dusk shines in the court of his face
 And death attacks in the battle if he attacks
 His dust for the Kilab was kohl to their eyes
 And his sword against the Janab overcame blame
 Ancestor's virtue is a cloud giving rain in him
 A sweetness as if his character were honey
 A hole is torn in the heaven of fame by his glory 15
 If an idea of it rose there it would never set
 He is the prince by whom the Tamim were destroyed
 Once, and their ruin led them to their death
 When they saw him and the horses of victory near
 And battle continuing they yielded their camp

The earth became too narrow when they were routed
 When one saw nothing he thought it a man
 After him and to this day if they were to run
 Horses in a baby's throat it wouldn't cough
 You have left those you encountered slaughtered 20
 And killed with fear those you did not encounter
 Many a far desert, where the heart of a guide is
 The heart of a lover, rewards me after delay
 I fixed my eyes on the star in that wasteland
 My face was free to the hot sun when it set
 I pounded its hard stones with hoofs of a camel
 Taking me by force to you over plain and peak
 If you were in my clothes and on its saddle cloth
 You would hear jinn howling in their hollows
 Until I arrive with a soul most of which is dead 25
 Would that I could live on that which is left
 I hope for your bounty and I do not fear delay
 O if he gave the world he would be miserly.

11 And he said also in his youth. (29)

How many the slain, martyred as I was slain
 By the white of a throat and a red cheek
 And by eyes of a wild fawn not like the eyes
 That overcame one passionately enslaved
 Flow stream of youth O days when my skirt
 Trailed in Dar Athla--come back to me!
 Your life with Allah! have you seen such moons
 Rising among the veils and the necklaces?
 Arrows whose feathers are eyelashes strike 5
 And pierce the heart before the skin
 They suck from my mouth some of those drops
 Which there are sweeter than the Unity
 Each slim-waisted one more delicate than wine
 Has a heart that is harder than stone
 Possessed of locks ambergris has drenched
 Mingled with rose water and incense
 They are black as the raven, full of darkness
 Very thick in waves but not frizzled
 The wind carries the musk from her braids 10
 She smiles with her cool even-spaced teeth
 She combines the body of Ahmad and sickness
 And the eyelids with this sleeplessness
 Here is my heart with you for my destruction
 So diminish its pain in me or increase it
 I welcome the emaciation that I have as a hero
 Hunted by ringlets on a brow and a neck
 Everything pertaining to blood is forbidden
 For drinking except the blood of the vine
 So pour it out since I am ransom for your eyes 15
 Among gazelles as are my goods and heritage

My head's gray hair, shame and my emaciation
 And my tears are my witnesses to your love
 What day have you made me happy with embrace
 You didn't scare me three days with denial?
 My remaining in Dar Nakhla is exactly similar
 To the stay of the Messiah among the Jews
 My bed is the saddle upon my stallion
 And still my shirt was woven of iron
 Close knit and flowing like a pool that flashes 20
 With David's hand they worked its weave
 What is my benefit if I am satisfied with times
 When life rushes onward with its harshness?
 My breast is anxious and my stay in search
 Of food is long so there is little rest for me
 Always I traverse the countries and my stars
 Are in decline but my purpose aspires
 Perhaps hopes will somehow be fulfilled
 By the kindness of the rare one praised
 By a prince whose garment is coarse cotton 25
 But Mervian silk is dress for the apes
 Live powerfully or die yet you are generous
 Amid thrusting lances and flutter of flags
 The heads of spears dissolve wrath the best
 Best cure for boiling rage in a breast
 Not as you have lived without any praise
 And then you die, die without being missed!
 Seek glory in the fire and leave humiliation
 Even though it be in immortal paradise
 The coward weakling is done to death and indeed 30
 He faints at the flutter of a child's veil
 But the intrepid youth is guarded and surely
 Wades in the water of a generous breast
 Not by my family am I great, they are so by me
 I boast of myself not of my ancestors
 They were the pride of everyone who used dad
 Asylum for a culprit and aid for refugee
 If I am surprising yet the wonder of wonders is
 One does not find any higher than him
 I am twin of reward and the master of rhyme 35
 The scourge of a foe and the rage of envy
 I am among these people, may Allah repay them,
 A stranger like Salih among the Thamud.

12 He spoke impromptu in his youth when Ubaid Allah
 ibn Khorasan made him a gift of a candy fish with
 almonds in honey. (35)

Many expectations have kept men busy
 While you are busy with noble actions
 They make an ideal of Hatim but if they knew
 You would be the point of a liberal proverb

Welcome and greetings to what you have sent
 Enough for Abu Qasim and the messengers
 A gift whose giver I did not see
 Unless I saw mankind as a single man
 The least of the platter is the fish
 That is swimming in a pool of honey
 How shall I requite this best of presents
 To one who doesn't see it as a gift for me.

5

13 He wrote to him again on the sides of a pot of
 saffron. (36)

Stop, for you cannot increase love for me
 That attains the goal and exceeds limit
 You sent it overflowing with generosity
 And I returned it filled with thanks
 It comes to you brimful though it is empty
 Double praise but you think it single
 Your character denies that which it ennobled
 Does it not long for and recall a bond?
 If you were a season that produced flowers
 You would be spring and they the roses.

14 He spoke about a sudden stop and the rain and wind
 were striking him. (37)

We are the remnant who inform of destruction
 Exhausted by travel like drinkers of wine
 We settled in this mosque by decree of the wind
 Upon us, from it a cloak of sand and dust
 My two friends, this station is not for such as us
 So saddle up and be off while it is light
 Do not ignore the blowing winds for they are
 Host to guests staying a night with Siwwar.

15 He spoke also in his youth praising Abu Muntasir
 Shuja ibn Muhammad ibn Aus Ma'an ibn Rida the
 Azdi. (38)

Waking upon wakefulness but such as I must wake
 Grief increases and the tears begin to flow
 The hardship of passion is to be as I seem to be
 A sleepless eye and a palpitating heart
 The lightning does not flash nor any bird sing
 Without my turning away and my heart torn
 I experienced the fire of love inextinguishable
 A fire of gatha wood is weak by its burning

I blamed the people of love until I tasted it 5
 Then I wondered how one died who did not love
 And I excused them and I knew my sin when I
 Reproached them, for I met what they met
 O sons of our father, we are people of the camp
 Always the raven of parting croaks in it
 We weep over the world but there are no people
 That the world collects and does not scatter
 Where are the mighty Chosroes of the first ages
 Storing up treasure that did not stay nor they?
 For each the plain was too narrow for his army 10
 Until he died and then a narrow tomb held him
 Silent when called as if they did not know
 That words for them were permitted and free
 For death comes even to the most precious souls
 One beguiled by his wealth is most absurd
 A man hopes and living is longing for something
 And age is burdened and youth is headlong
 I have wept for my youth when locks over my ear
 Were black and sweat on my face had a color 15
 And worried about it before the day of departure
 Until I almost choked with tears of my eyelids
 But as for the people of Aus ibn Ma'an ibn Rida
 He honors one who turns his camel toward him
 I extolled the power of their house when a sun
 Came out of it yet there was no dawn there
 I was surprised at earth when the clouds poured
 From above and its rocks did not grow leaves
 Their perfume in the praise of goodness spreads
 In all of the places where it is inhaled
 Musky in the exhalation except that it is 20
 Foreign to others and does not cling to them
 O you who seek the like of Muhammad in our age
 Do not trouble us with an unattainable search
 The Merciful has never created one like Muhammad
 And it is my suspicion that He will not do so
 O you who are giving so much and through whom
 I by taking it am able to give alms with it
 Rain down on me the cloud of your bounty richly
 And glance at me in mercy so I do not drown
 A son of a meddler lies who says in his ignorance 25
 That bounty is dead when you live to provide.

16 He spoke again in his youth praising Ali ibn Ahmad
 al Khorasani. (42)

A bit of a soul took leave on the day they went
 I know not which voyager's funeral I escorted
 They waved goodbye and we were liberal with souls
 Pouring from eyes and the tears were poison
 My entrails are on coals blazing with passion
 But my eyes are grazing in meadows of beauty

If mountain tops were loaded with what we were
 The morning we parted they would quickly split
 By that in my breast, it is she whose spirit came 5
 To me in darkness while the carefree slept
 She came visiting, perfume not touching her dress
 But like musk on her sleeve it spread afar
 She did not sit, then she turned to lengthen step
 Like a weaning nurse before the suckling
 My wonder at her scared off what came with her
 From sleep and the distressed heart burned
 O that night which has expanded as I passed it
 Poison of the snake was sweet which I drank
 Submit to her and be humble whether near or far 10
 He is no lover who is not abased and lowly
 Nor any garment of glory except robe of Ibn Ahmad
 On anyone unless it is patched with meanness
 He is one who gave richly to the Jadila of Tai
 By him Allah gives what he wishes and refuses
 In this is nobility; no day passes that the sun
 Rises on a head richer in conscience than his
 So the wombs of knowledge are attached to him
 And the wombs of wealth continue to divide
 A youth whose ideas for his age have myriad parts 15
 The least bit of any is mind for all others
 A cloud, to us he is rain that does not wash off
 Nor is false lightning in him when it flashes
 When a needy one turns to him then he himself
 Intercedes as a mediator with himself in it
 Flames of war die out if his fingers do not stir
 And brown reed bare of bark is all too smooth
 The slender ends on the middle of its head run
 Barefoot and its run is fortified when cut
 Its tongue pours the darkness on the lightness 20
 What is not heard is grasped by all who speak
 Sword's edge is avoidable in the strike, and
 More rebel to its lord, but pen is more loyal
 If a cloud had touched it with generous hand
 Its place wouldn't pass in lands east or west
 So eloquent when it discourses it finds each word
 As a root of beauty that ramifies itself
 Not like the sea of water where whales and frogs
 Can plumb depths to where water ceases
 Is a sea that hinders the needy, and has a taste 25
 So bitter, like a sea that bars none but aids?
 The finest thought is perplexed by his far deeps
 And drowns in the wave that is his eloquence
 Hail to you O chieftain who resides in Manbij
 Whose aspiration is set above the Two Fish
 Is it not strange your description is a miracle
 And that my thought limps up to your height?
 And that you are in robes and your heart in you
 And yet it is wider than the court of earth?
 And your heart in a world that if it entered it 30
 With us and jinn they would not find a return?

Is not every generosity except yours today vanity
And every praise except for yours misplaced?

17 He spoke in his youth through the tongue of some of
the Tanukhi when they asked this of him. (48)

Qudha knows that I am that young man
Whom they saved for calamities of time
And my renown points to the Banu Khindif
Since everything noble comes from Yemen
I am the son of battle, the son of bounty
Son of slashing and son of thrusting
I am son of the desert and son of caravan
Son of saddle and son of mountain side
Long the sword hanger, high the tent pole
Long the lance shaft, high the point
Iron are the grips and iron are glances
Iron the saber and iron the shield
My sword outdistances the deaths of mankind
Ahead of them as if they were in a race
Its blade sees into the obscurity of heart
When I am in whirlwinds I see not myself
I will establish it as judgment on souls
If my tongue is agent for it, it will do.

5

18 He spoke also in his youth. (49)

Stay you two. See my rain for there is a cloud
And do not fear the opposite when I speak
The vile man attacked me with blows on his butt
Another had cotton as stones in his hands
In his ignorance he was blind to his ignorance
Witless of my knowledge that he was witless
He didn't know that as king of earth I'd be poor
Or if on the backs of Two Fish I'd still walk
My desire makes contemptible to me every object
A seeming distant goal is limited in my eyes
I was still the mountain whose heights had no end
Until calamities appeared to me as injustice
I was disquieted by concern that stirred my breast
With fastest of camels all of which are brisk
When night had veiled us her hoofs showed us
In sparks from stones what flame never showed
On the back of the strong camel I was on a wave
Driving me on the seas which have no shores
It seemed to me the deserts were in my hearing
And I was for them what the gossips say
He who wants what I want of glory and eminence
Finds life and death of equal value to him

5

10

O there is no business except it be your lives
 And no entreaty between us except swords
 What they drink of the soul of man is his spirit
 They don't return from a miser even if he is so
 Emaciation of my life is the thinness of my honor
 And not the thinness that the food makes.

19 And he spoke also in his youth. (52)

A guest without modesty has come to my head
 The sword would do better for my locks than it
 Be off! remove whiteness with no splendor in it
 You are more black in my eye than the dark
 With love my killer and white hair my nourishing
 My love was childish, my gray puberty attained
 I do not pass a camp trace without asking it
 Nor a veiled one without shedding of my blood
 She sighed for a loyalty that was not divided 5
 On the day of parting and people not united
 I kissed her and my tears mingled with her tears
 And she kissed me in fear, mouth to mouth
 Then I tasted the water of life from her lips
 If it fell on dust it would revive past men
 She looked at me with the eyes of a tearful fawn
 Touching the dew on the roses with her fingers
 Go slow with your unfair judgment against us
 For I am ransom with all men as judge
 You discovered just what I discovered of anxiety 10
 But you did not pick what I picked in pain
 Then a bit of it tore from a robe of beauty
 And you went as I in double dress of illness
 There is no making pleas for hope in my object
 Nor any content with poverty in my character
 Nor do I suspect time's daughters will leave me
 Until my aspirations bar the way for them
 Blame the nights that betrayed my good fortune
 With poor estate and pardon, don't blame me
 I see men but my result is nothing but sheep 15
 There is memory of bounty but my pay is words
 And some lord of wealth who is poor in manliness
 Not rich by it as he is rich in nonentity
 The blade will have a friend in me like its edge
 And my story as bravest of the brave results
 I have been patient until patience is no more
 So now I rush ahead until rushing is no more
 I will leave the faces of the horses mutilated
 While war is more fixed than a leg on a foot
 And thrusting burns and the press shakes them 20
 Until it is as if they had a kind of mania
 The long spears wound them as they are stern
 As if on their bits colocynth were bound

With each fighting man who is always expecting
 That I show him some of the empire of slaves
 Old men who look on five prayers as unnecessary
 And justify blood of pilgrims in sanctuary
 Whenever they are gored by him under a dust cloud
 The regiment of lions flee him but he flees not
 My flash makes the land forget sky lightning 25
 And suffices with flowing blood for rain
 Drink from the pool of death my soul and leave
 A trough of fear of death to sheep and cattle
 If I do not let you flow over the spear point
 I am not named son of mother glory or bounty
 Shall that rule a kingdom with swords thirsty and
 Birds hungry--that flesh on a butcher's table?
 One who if he saw me as a pool would die of thirst
 And if I appeared to him in sleep he would wake?
 The rendezvous of all the thin blades is tomorrow 30
 And of those Arab and foreign kings who disobey
 If they reply my object for these is not in them
 If they turn I will not content these with them.

20 He said also in his youth when Abu Sa'id Mukhaimar
 chided him on avoiding the meeting with kings. (59)

Abu Sa'id, put aside the complaint
 Many an opinion is wide of the mark
 For they multiply the curtains
 And set up doorkeepers to reject us
 But the edge of the cutting sword
 And the brown lance and the horse
 Raise whatever veils are between us.

21 And he said also in his youth impromptu in the char-
 acter of one who asked him this. (60)

My love for you denies the pleasure of my sleep
 You went away but that stayed in my breast
 O did not you find in the Sera the saltiness
 Which I poured into the Forat with my tears
 I was wary of the turmoil of your departure
 Until the pain overcame me at the farewell
 Patience rode away in my saddle and it was as if
 I followed it with my sighs as funeral escort.

22 And he spoke also in his youth impromptu. (60)

What halting place shall I advance to
 What great thing can I fear

For all that Allah has created
 And what he has not yet created
 Is despised by my ambition
 As a hair in the parting of my locks.

23 And he said in his youth. (60)

When you find nothing to dock poverty by sitting
 Then get up and find something to dock life.

24 He replied to a man who said: I greeted you and you
 did not return the greeting. (60)

I am critical of your criticism
 Amazed at your amazement
 Since I, when you encountered me,
 Was complaining of your absence
 I was busy with returning your greeting
 My inattention to you was for your sake.

25 He said in his youth. (60)

Aid with your bounty the words by which I leave
 In east and west those who hate you abased
 I waited for you until my saddling time came
 And this farewell, for take what you will.

26 He said also in his youth but did not recite to
 anyone. (61)

Cautious of the guard but his thoughts tricked him
 He curbed tears but their urgency fell heavy
 He who hides love is revealed on a day of parting
 The friend of tears has secrets not to be hid
 Except for fawns of Ad I do not grieve for them
 Nor for their herd except for the young ones
 For each black-eyed one with purity on its teeth
 A wine mingled with musk intoxicates it
 Intensely white is its brow, dark are its eyebrows
 Red are its veils, black its plaits of hair
 It lends me the languor of its eye and loads me
 With a weight of desire like its belt holds
 O you who judge my soul and then punish me
 And who assist my heart in my death
 At the return of beauty's power a second time
 I am consoled for you and night's watcher sleeps

After what my night that had no dawn was it seems
 As if the first of the last day was its end
 The Emir was gone and good vanished from the land 10
 Its pulpits almost wept at the loss of his name
 Its houses complained of the solitude of the living
 And its tombs told of the grief of the dead
 Until that time when his tent was set up here
 His townspeople and his bedouin shouted Allah!
 It renewed joy and grief did not pursue him
 Nor did affection in a heart stray from him
 When Homs was empty of you--may it never be empty!
 Its dawn did not water it with a first shower
 You entered it as rays of the sun were kindling 15
 Light of your face among horsemen dazzled it
 If you attacked with ironclad cavalry troop as
 Changes of fate, its reverses would not occur
 The procession moves on and the eyes are lifted
 From it to a king whose augury is fortunate
 They are dazzled by the face in his crown, a moon
 In his armor, a lion whose claws are bloody
 His tempers are sweet, his real cares are proud
 A number counted before his benefits counted
 Too narrow for his army the world and if as wide 20
 As his bosom his troops could not camp there
 When the thoughts of a man enter upon the borders
 Of his glory his thoughts are drowned therein
 Swords are a defense against his enemy with him
 As if they were his sons or his tribe
 When he unsheathes them in war they leave no body
 Unless its inside become outward to the eye
 And they make certain that truth is in his hand
 And they guarantee that Allah is his helper
 They left the skulls of the Banu Auf and Thalab 25
 Its helmets on heads without the bodies
 With his sword he wades a sea of death that is
 Behind them and the tide is up to the ankles
 Until the horse gains the course and his hoofs
 Do not hit the earth due to the stinking dead
 How much blood his spear heads drink from him
 And how much gore his swords lap up there
 Many death hours the brown lance sported with him
 Life has fled from and the eagles visited him
 He who said you were not the best of all men had 30
 As excuse with men that he did not know you
 Or doubted you were the only one in their times
 Without a peer but with my soul I pledge it
 O he is one in whom I take refuge for what I hope
 One in whom I seek safety from what I fear
 And the one whose hand I imagined was an ocean
 Of generosity and whose gifts were its gems
 Men cannot mend a bone when you have broken it
 Nor break again a bone that you have healed
 Pity a young man for whom the hand of grief 35
 Ruined his luck and whose hope faded in prison.

27 He spoke praising Shuja ibn Muhammad ibn al-Aziz, the
Tai of Manbij. (66)

Rare is a cure for one whose illness is wide eyes
A disease from which lovers before this died
Let him who will look at me, for the sight of me
Is a warning to one who thinks love is easy
It is nothing but a glimpse after a glimpse
When it settles in a heart reason saddles up
Her love runs the course of my blood in my limbs 5
There is work for me in her apart from all work
She captured me with pretty coquetry decking her
She put kohl on her eyes but had no collyrium
As if glances of the eye in its violence to us
Were a hostile guard or an enemy breaking in
Sickness has not preserved a hair of my body
Or less, though there is some kind of activity
When they blame me for this I answer with a sigh
My little darling heart, my soul, O beauty
As if your guard had prevented my hearing
The blame, so complaint could not enter there
As if wakefulness at night loved my eyeballs and 10
Between them in every parting was a bond for us
I love her whose comparison is in the full moon
But I long for one whom likeness cannot hit
For the only one in the world, for Ibn Muhammad
Brave, for whom virtue is Allah's, then his
For that sweet fruit which is of the branches of
Tai and Qahtan ibn Hud is the root of him
For a chief who if Allah spoke to people without
A prophet the messenger would speak in him
For a grasper of souls and of lion-heroes 15
Whose wars horsemen and soldiers relate
For the lord of wealth; each time sums scatter
Parting gathers in dispersion to grandeur
A hero who when his sword leaves the scabbard
And you see him you don't know which is blade
You saw the son of mother death; if his courage
Spreads to men of earth the breed will cease
On a swimmer with a wave of death at his throat
Always, as if arrows on his breast were but rain
How many eyes of heroes stare at his attack and 20
Do not blink, O spears are kohl for them
If one called: Mercy! he said: A place for Mercy!
But man's pity in another place is stupidity
Except for his trusting himself with pity's burden
Earth would fall and the load collapse with it
The hopeful have been wide of every goal and
Roads are narrow for them except to your door
Bounty calls the sleepers to the night journey
Tells them: Arise! stinginess is destroyed
The gifts of his hand come before his promises 25
Nor does he break promises or make delay

Nearer than their limit is the return of the past
 Easier than their numbering raindrops and sand
 How can the days punish one for whom their ways
 Are the shoe on his foot in rough places
 The intention he aims at does not conquer him
 If he weakened it would only be to his like
 Enough praise for Thuella you are one of them
 For the age, that its people are your family
 And Wa'il have got glory for themselves from you 30
 Blessed are eyes not free of you an hour
 No need among the poor to sniff your lightning
 Nor sterility in a land if you are its shower.

28 He spoke also praising Shuja ibn Muhammad the Tai of
 Manbij. (72)

It is tryst day with you, but where is the promise?
 O no tomorrow for the day of your departure
 Death has easier claws than this your abandonment
 Life is more distant than you. Do not go!
 She who sheds my blood with her eyelashes surely
 Does not know that my blood will be on her
 She saw my paleness and said: What is his trouble?
 She sighed so I said: The sighing sickness. 5
 Away she went and shame colored her whiteness
 My color was like gilding that colors silver
 I saw the horn of the sun on the moon of darkness
 Declining, a branch was bending near it
 She is of the Ady bedouin and in front of her
 Is booty of souls and a fire of war is lit
 And wayless deserts and the horses and swords
 The spears and the menaces and the threats
 She showed her love in nights after we had gone
 And fate went against her but it was hobbled
 You go too far, O doctor of eyelids in the sick-- 10
 His doctor is ill and the nurse is visited!
 Yet his are the people of Abd al-Aziz ibn al-Rida
 Deserts and their camels are for any convoy
 Who among men of noble rank does not say:
 Who among you, Syria, except Shuja is sought for?
 He gives so I said: What he owns is his bounty.
 He attacks so I said: What is born is his sword's.
 The descriptions lose their way with him because
 They follow his paths on which they go far
 In every battle the kidneys must suffer 15
 They blame in him what the spear heads praise
 Vengeance on vengeance of fate he inflicts on them
 As grace upon grace which cannot be disowned
 In his affairs both his tongue and fingers and
 His heart are wonderful to those who seek them
 Courageous, the blood of a fierce lion is his dye
 Terrible, the hackles of death tremble at him

Manbij when you are absent is nothing but an eye
 Watching and your face is its repose and eyeshade
 And the night when you approach in it is bright 20
 And the dawn when you depart from it is dark
 While you gradually come near it rises in pride
 Until the double pole star recedes in its dust
 Any other city would have had eminence like it
 If such as you were found in such another
 Enemies display happiness for you as if they
 Rejoiced though they have persistent anxiety
 You ruin them by envy to show them what they are
 They are ruined by envy of one without envy
 If they beat a retreat the heat of their hearts 25
 In the heart of noon would melt the rocks
 Foreign chiefs watched but saw none of theirs
 When they saw you so they said: He is a chief!
 All of them remain as if you were all of them
 And you stay among them as if you were alone
 Disquieting, your fury wants to plague mankind
 Unless reason and leadership should deter you
 Be wherever you like our camels will reach you
 For earth is one and you alone are unique
 Preserve the sword and do not degrade it for it 30
 Indicts by your right hand and skulls witness
 The blood dries on it and though it is free from
 The scabbard it sees it is in a sheath
 Copious, if it vomited what you give it to drink
 A foaming sea of blood would flow
 Death does not share in the blood from a heart
 Unless his blade in her hand gives aid
 Truly the raids and the bounty and spears are
 Allies for Tai whether defeating or rescuing
 Take care, O Julhuma, they come forth to you and 35
 The fringes of your eye are spears and swords
 That are greater than all the mountains of Tihama
 In heart, more generous than a morning shower
 It meets you as if girded red with blood
 The liver and neck make its gems disappear
 Until one explains to you: This is their Lord!
 And they are helpers and people most loyal
 How can Adam be the father of all mankind when 40
 Your father is Muhammad and you men and jinn?
 Words waste away unguarded by your description
 Will what fades be kept by the inexhaustible?

29 He spoke of Abu Dulaf ibn Khundaj and he had made a pledge with him in prison. (79)

I am used to length of imprisonment and wasting
 To the dungeon and the chains O Abu Dulaf
 Not by choice did I accept your good work for me
 Hunger makes lions content with carrion

Be whatever you will O dungeon for certainly
 I become used to death with patient soul
 If my stay with you were to be decreased
 There would be no pearl in the oyster shell.

30 He spoke in his youth and people had falsely accused
 him to the authority who imprisoned him and he wrote
 to him and while he was in prison praised him and he
 absolved him from what he was imprisoned for. (80)

O may Allah split the roses on those cheeks
 And cut the waists of slim-waisted beauties
 They have made the blood flow from my eyes
 And punished my heart with long absence
 How many youths are seriously ill with love
 How many dead are martyrs to absence?
 O what a pity! How bitter is separation
 And how precious those fires in the livers
 It has stirred up longing among the lovers 5
 And killed them clinging to the beloved
 It made my soul eager for what is not shameful
 In a loved one with red lips and full breasts
 May it be and they be ransom for the Emir
 May there be no end to grace in provision
 He interposed the sword in front of the threats
 And his gifts came before the promises
 Thus his wealth rises as a star in bad times
 And his clients rise as stars in good times
 And if I didn't fear anything but his enemies 10
 For him, I would announce him as an immortal
 He attacks Aleppo with the forelocks of horses
 And brown lances that drip blood in the dust
 Many the swords that are travelers who do not stop
 Either at the neck or in the scabbard
 They lead destruction on the morning of battle
 To every army whose numbers are vast
 The Kharshani retreated his obedient followers
 Like sheep who heard the roar of the lions
 They think the sound of the winds is fearful 15
 The whinny of a horse or flutter of a flag
 Who is like the Emir, son of a daughter of Emirs
 Or who is like his fathers and grandfathers?
 They ran to the heights and they were young
 They ruled and gave and yet were in cradles
 O possessor of me as a slave whose business
 Is gifts of silver and the freeing of slaves
 I called to you at a time when hope was cut off
 Death for me was a rope around the jugular
 I called to you when perishableness exhausted me 20
 And the weight of irons had weakened my legs
 And though their movement had once been in shoes
 Yet their motion surely now was in chains

I have been among the gentlemen in an assembly
 And now I am with a mob of monkeys
 Shall obligatory penalties be urged upon me
 And my penalty come before duty to kneel?
 It is said: You transgressed against the world--
 Between my birth and my being able to sit!
 It is not for you to accept the word of calumny 25
 Strength of witness is in strength of fact
 Do not listen to any of those who brood hatred
 Do not care about the disputes of the Jews
 Distinguish between the claim: You intended it.
 And the claim: You did it in high spirits.
 As to bounty, enough for you is what you give me
 For myself, though I were more sad than Thamud.

31 He spoke to Mu'adh who blamed him for going to war.
 (84)

O Abu Abdallah Mu'adh as for myself
 My stand in the battle is hid from you
 You considered my goal too great and that
 We risked the soul of the body for it
 Can misfortune seize upon one such as I
 And he be anxious at a meeting with death?
 And if time were to appear to me in human shape
 My sword would stain the parting of its hair
 Nor will the nights achieve their purpose 5
 Nor pass on with my bridle in their hands
 When the eyes of the horsemen are filled with me
 Alas for them whether awake or asleep.

32 He spoke to a man who reported what people said. (85)

I am the source of rule for a great chief
 Your dogs have roused me by barking
 Are the nobly born other than nobly born
 Or those of pure race other than genuine?
 They do not know me but if I live a little yet
 Spear heads will give my ancestry to them.

33 He spoke impromptu when Abu Dhabis invited him to
 drink. (86)

More pleasant than the Khandarisan wine
 And sweeter than the communion of the cup
 Is the communion of the blade and the lance
 My rush with battalion against battalion

For my death in battle is my life since
 I see this life as the reward of souls
 But if I drank from hands of a drinking pal
 I would rejoice that it was Abu Dhabis.

34 One of the Kilabi said to him: I drink this cup as
 a toast to you. And he answered. (86)

Whenever you drink wine straight with pleasure
 We drink its like as the generous drink
 O bravo for men whose drinking pals are lances
 They pour freely and the winebearer is resolve.

35 And he spoke impromptu in his youth. (87)

It is for my friends to fill
 The cup with pure wine
 It is for them to be lavish
 And for me not to drink
 Until there are scimitars
 Clashing in excitement.

36 He spoke to Ibn Abd al Wahhab while his son was sitting
 beside a lamp. (87)

Don't you see what I see O my lord?
 It is as if we were in a pathless heaven
 Is not your son one Farqad, the lamp the other?
 You are darkness' moon, the assembly the sky.

37 He spoke and Abu Bakr the Tai fell asleep so Abu
 Tayyib recited and awoke him. (87)

The rhymes do not make you grow sleepy but rather
 Efface you until you are what is not found
 As if your ear was your mouth when you heard them
 And they an opiate on which you got drunk.

38 And he spoke also in his youth. (87)

I hid your love since it was an honor from you
 Then my secrecy and openness became one to you
 It seemed to rise until it overflowed my body
 And my sickness became in my body my secrecy.

39 And he spoke when a man offered him a cup and urged
him strongly to drink it. (88)

Many a brother incited us to freedom from an oath
To drink again and again from this Khortum
But I made my refusal of its spouse an atonement
For drinking it and thus I drank without sin.

40 He spoke praising Ubaid Allah ibn Khorasan of Tripoli.
(88)

O wild fawn, if it were not for the human fawn
I would never be in this pass of unlucky love
Nor would I water earth, for a cloud is contrary
With tears when my soul is dry with torment
Nor would I stand for three nights with a body
Worn with grief near the worn camp traces
A murder of her eye inquiring of the campsite
Killed by languor of eyelid and dark red lips
A virgin who if the sun saw her it would not rise 5
If the willow branch saw her it would not sway
Before you bracelets were never tight on fawns
Nor had I heard of damask on the covert
If the misfortunes of fate strike me from near by
They strike a man not coward or weakling
He who envies your sons O Ubaid Allah ransoms them
Horse's hoof is ransomed by wild ass' forehead
O father of the chiefs who guard their neighbors
And leave lions like dogs without their prey
He has the whitest of foreheads and the turban 10
Seems to cover the light on a live coal
Near and far, beloved and hated and joyous
Elegant with sweet, bitter, soft and hard
Generous, aloof, eager, faithful, brother of trust
Sharp, noble, wise, quick, content and witty
If the bounty of his hands were morning showers
Rare the dry place for sand grouse in a desert
Most noble of men, heaven envied earth for them
And every city has fallen short of Tripoli
What kings shall I be wary of if they are my goal 15
What heroes if they are my sword and shield?

41 He spoke also in his youth to his friend when he in-
tended to travel. (92)

I loved giving to you when you intended a journey
And I found the greatest I had was small
And I knew you were desirous of noble acts
In love with them morning and evening

So I have made what was given to me a gift
 From me to you and its cover is expectation
 Goodness finds its acceptance easy to your hands
 And its bearing was difficult for me.

42 He spoke praising Muhammad ibn Zuraiq of Tarsus. (93)

O you who appeared to us so as to move us deeply
 Then turned away and did not heal the dying
 You made my joy in you a happiness in sleep
 And left me sitting under the two Farqads
 You cut off the bit of drunkenness in anguish
 And passed around the wine of parting's cup
 If you are among those departing then my tears
 Satisfy your water bag and the camel's thirst
 Beware lest such as you should become a miser 5
 And with such a face as yours lest it frown
 With an embrace like yours lest it be untouchable
 And such a grace as yours lest it be ugly
 A woman who excited between me and my censurers
 A war and who left the heart a furnace
 Pure, her coquetry protects her lest one make talk
 Proud, shame protects her from swerving
 When I found the cure of my sickness with her
 The prescription of a Galen was easy for me
 Zuraiq remains on the borders as one praised 10
 Precious he remains for precious souls
 If he rest his treasurer parts with his wealth
 If he sallies bodies part with their heads
 A king who when you hate yourself you hate him
 And you prefer desolation while you hate men
 One who plunges into the depths without defense
 Expeditious when the spears are thrusting
 I examined all creatures but I never found
 Any subjects beside him as leader
 A man who depicts the heights of miracle 15
 He baffles thought and corrupts comparison
 There is stinginess in him for humanity, not with it
 Due to it he is sad for them, not because of them
 If Dhu'l Qarnain had made use of his wisdom
 When he got to the dark, suns would have come
 And if his sword had struck off Lazarus' head
 In a day's battle Jesus had been helpless
 And if the waves of the sea were his right hand
 They would not split when Moses crossed them
 Or if sun and moon had the light of his forehead 20
 They'd be worshipped and the world be Magian
 When I heard of him I heard only of one alone
 And when I saw him I saw a battalion of him
 I looked at his fingers and they flowed with gifts
 I touched his sword and souls ran from it

O him! in his shade we take refuge from time
 In eternity, and by his name we drive off Iblis
 Fame is true to you, its descriptions short of you
 One who is in Iraq sees you at Tarsus
 You stay in a city; thought of you is everywhere 25
 It dislikes a siesta and hates a late sleep
 And when you seek your prey you depart from it
 And when you withdraw you take it as your lair
 I scatter pearls upon you so take them for real
 The tricksters are many; beware of a fraud
 I kept them veiled from the people of Antioch
 I show them to you for you shine as bridegroom
 The best of birds are in palaces and the worst
 Take refuge in ruins and roost in the tombs
 If the world is generous it ransoms you by its men 30
 If it wars it conscripts hermits for you.

43 And he spoke also about him. (98)

Muhammad ibn Zuraiq we know of no one who
 If we lost you would give before he reckoned
 I sought you out and the journey was short
 But the house was far and provision used up
 So keep your hand from flow and divert its shower
 When I am satisfied or else the land drowns.

44 He spoke praising Ubaid Allah ibn Yahya al Buhturi.
(99)

I wept O campsite until almost I made you weep
 And I, and my tears, pined away in your camp
 Be gracious this morning for you stirred my grief
 And return our greeting as we greeted you
 By what judgment of time can you be taken for
 A desert fawn instead of maid of your clan
 Some days the suns do not appear with you for us
 Except they draw blood, a glance's shedding 5
 And life is green and ruins of the camp gleam
 As if the light of Ubaid Allah were over you
 Man is saved O Ibn Yahya when you are his desire
 Riders of camels betrayed, not turning to you
 You inspire the poets to poetry and they praise
 All those they praise by that which is in you
 And they teach men glory by you and gain power
 Over the finest meanings from your meaning
 So be as you wish O you who have no comparison
 Or how you wish for no creature approaches you
 The thanks of petitioners to whom you give show me 10
 The way to your bounty by a well-trodden path

The majesty of your power is above my imagination
 By the little I praise you I seem to mock you
 It is enough that you are of Qahtan in eminence
 And if you boast then all are your clients
 If I fall short in ratio as you exceed in bounty
 To men, they would see me as your enemy
 Present to your bounty; it calls and makes me hear
 Your ransom among men, my friends; I ransom you
 You still follow the last gift with another 15
 Until I think my life is among your gifts
 If you say: Here. It's a custom you are known by
 Or if: No--but your mouth never gives a No.

45 And he spoke praising Ubaid Allah Yahya al Buhturi.
 (101)

Is it your saliva or water from a cloud or wine?
 In my mouth it is cool and in my liver coals
 Is it a branch or a sandhill or are you a maiden
 And what I kissed lightning or teeth?
 My censurers saw the face of one I love at night
 They said: We see a sun but dawn has not risen.
 They see what there is of magic in her glance
 Swords whose edges are ever red with my blood
 Calm beauty attains the utmost in her movements 5
 No excuse for not dying at sight of her face
 To you Ibn Yahya ibn al Walid the camel crosses
 A desert with me; her flesh and blood poetry
 With thoughts of you I sprinkle her burning heart
 She goes earth's length, a handspan in her eyes
 To the lion of war whose sword is fed with lions
 To bounty's sea in whose wave seas drown
 If his generosity leaves any of his inheritance
 It is like what the flight leaves of the lover
 Young man, every day he gathers souls as his wealth 10
 His lance is honor, not the dark one of Rudaina
 The difference between him and a cloud is great
 But his gifts are rain and his favors a sea
 If the world submitted to judgment of his hand
 The world would find its greatness small
 The majesty of his power shows its power little
 But his power is not power for the terrific
 When he points with his face toward the heavens
 The stars fall and the moon is eclipsed
 You, see him as the earthly moon and king who has 15
 Dominion after Allah and glory and esteem
 Much wakefulness of eye without any cause
 Keeps him awake with thought that ennobles him
 His is a generosity that destroys praise as if
 Thanks swore he could not be repaid for it
 Abu Ahmad, there is no honor except for his clan
 Nor boasting in affairs not touching Buhturi

They are men but they belong to noble actions
 Cities enriched and travelers guided by them
 By whom do I make proverbs or whom compare to you 20
 When men of the age and the age are short of you?

46 And he spoke praising his brother Abu Ubada Ubaid
 Allah Yahya al Buhturi. (104)

Passion will not be content with me in this grief
 Until I am without a heart and liver
 Nor will these campsites where the beloved was
 Complain to me nor do I complain to anyone
 But all the rumbling showers still wear them down
 And illness thins me until my body tells of it
 Each time my tears flow my patience wanes
 As if some of my strength ran from my eyelids
 Where are the sighs which I loaded him with 5
 Where, Ibn Yahya, is the lion's attack from you?
 When I weigh the world with you, you outweigh it
 And large numbers of men seem few to me
 Joy never settled in my soul even for a day
 O Abu Ubada until you settled in my thoughts
 A king who when his treasury is full of wealth
 Makes it taste food of a child bereft mother
 An alert mind, troubles are known before tomorrow
 In his heart as his eyes see them afterward 10
 This splendor and this light is not of mankind
 Nor is the lenity in it lenity of a hand
 What a hand that rivals showers in two seasons
 When they depart one returns and the other not
 I had been thinking that glory came from Mudhar
 Until al Buhturi, so now it is of Udad
 They are people who when their swords rain death
 You think a cloud is generous to the land
 I cannot make an end of my ideas of your traits
 Rather I find their end a goal of eternity.

47 He spoke praising Musawar ibn Muhammad al Rumi. (107)

Terrible as it is for me it may yet be worse
 Is wormwood the food of this singing fawn?
 Drunkenness plays with its walk and leaves it
 A statue among statues except for breath
 It pays no mind; I look at it and its cheeks
 Are blushing but my heart is wounded
 It shoots but its hands do not aim; what hits me
 Is an arrow that still hurts--arrows stop
 The visit nears but there is no visit and yet 5
 The heart is early so let us meet and rest

Our secret is disclosed to you and our veiling
 Is thin so the declaration is plain to you
 When the camels start away then my soul is broken
 With grief for they are like palm trees
 And parting reveals the beauties of the beloved
 Beauty of patience is ugly once she is gone
 A hand waving goodbye and a glance lifted up
 A heart that melts and tears that spread
 The dove grieves and if it were like my grieving 10
 The arak tree would aid the dove's lament
 If a north wind traversed that length with a rider
 On its back it would kneel exhausted
 I agonized with a camel's stirrup whose convoy
 For fear of death sang the "Glory to Allah"
 If it were not for the Emir Musawar ibn Muhammad
 It would not tempt danger or reject advice
 And if she weakens with Abu Muzaffer as her goal
 Befitting her and me is death as our lot
 We see his lightning but the sky is not cloudy 15
 Freely he gives but winds do not milk him
 Hope for something profitable, fear of some evil
 Makes evening cup of thanks and morning cup
 Raging against purses of silver which bring no
 Consolation and forgiveness to wrongdoers
 If he shared the generosity of his usable wealth
 With men there would be no greed in the age
 His ears disregard the blame and tolerate
 The hole in the nose of a censurer
 He is one who when the age is forgot his memory 20
 And story are explained in their books
 Our hearts are overcome by his handsomeness
 Our clouds are disgraced by his favors
 He overwhelms jousting and brings back no spears
 Splintered to bits though the armor is whole
 That saffron on this dirt is from the blood
 The hair cloth on the sky is dust of battle
 He steps from corpse to corpse in front of him
 Lord of horses, behind him the prostrate
 The profound love of his beloved has joy in him 25
 The hidden hate of his enemies is an ulcer
 One veils enmity but it cannot be concealed
 The glance of the enemy reveals what is secret
 O son of him whom no cloak covers like his son's
 Eminence, or tomb holds like that well-being
 We ransom you for bounty when gifts are asked
 For terror when blood and sweat are mingled
 If you were a sea there would be no shore to you
 If you are a cloud wind is too weak for you
 I fear for the land and its people due to you 30
 Since there is no Noah to warn Noah's folk
 It is weak in a free man to be poor if before him
 Is provision of Allah and your door open
 Verses complain of my intention to take refuge
 With another than you as object of praise

The sweet perfumes of the gardens are their words
 Needing rain they seek to praise and spread
 The strength is small but what of beauty's son?
 When you do good to him the tongue is eloquent.

48 He spoke also praising Masawar ibn al Rumi. (113)

Is this Masawar or is this the arc of the sun
 Or a lion of the wood who precedes the wazir?
 Sheathe what you unsheathed for you left its edge
 Broken and it left the people uprooted
 Consider! you smashed Yazdath's son and his allies
 Don't you see all men are as the Banu Yazdath?
 You left their faces, wherever you met them,
 In pieces as their necks and their livers
 In the battle death stood in the front against them 5
 In his narrows, and he gained the mastery
 Their souls turned to stone when you approached
 You poured it out and gave to drink with steel
 When they saw you they saw your father Muhammad
 In armor and the brother of your father Mu'adh
 Striking off their heads you urged their tongues
 To say: There is no horseman except this one.
 Heedless, you rise upon them like a cloud
 Raining death in storms and small drops
 If there is a prisoner you stain his clothes 10
 With blood and wet his thighs with urine
 Against him the Mashrafi swords bar his roads
 He cannot turn to Aleppo nor to Bagdad
 He sought the command of the border but his origin
 Was somewhere between Karchia and Kalwadha
 It's as if he thought spear points something sweet
 Or thought them dates of Bernia or Izadh
 Before you one did not find when lances varied
 Any who made jousting refuge from jousting
 One for whom life and its sweet is not a success 15
 Until his penetrating will succeeds
 Accustomed to wearing armor he thinks that it is
 In the cold, silk and in noon heat, cotton
 Wonderful your taking him but how much more
 Wonderful if there had been no taking!

49 He spoke mourning the death of Muhammad ibn Ishaq
 al Tanukhi. (116)

As for me, I know and my heart perceives
 That life even if you covet it is a delusion
 And I see that everyone is comforting himself
 With some excuse but moves toward nothing

Is not the vicinity of the tomb a pledge of rest
 In which rays and light are from his face?
 I had not thought before your burial in the earth
 That the stars would penetrate this dust
 I had not hoped before your bier I could see 5
 Radwa being borne by the hands of men
 They went with him and for each mourner behind him
 It was the cry of Moses the day Sinai shook
 And the sun in the center of the sky was sick
 The earth was disturbed and quaked almost
 There was rustle of angel's wings about him
 And the eyes of the people of Latakia turned
 When they came to the tomb it was as if its door
 Was cut in the hearts of each individual
 Provided from his wealth with a shroud that decays 10
 Asleep and the camphor as kohl for the eyes
 In him was eloquence and generosity and piety
 And bravery complete and reason and goodness
 Praise was guaranteed him at the end of his life
 When he was buried and as it were resurrected
 It is as if Jesus ibn Mariam was a memory of him
 And as if Lazarus had his shape in the tomb.

The sons of the uncle of the dead man asked for more
 and he spoke impromptu. (118)

His fingers dried up and yet they were seas
 His wile quenched and they were flames
 He was wept for but his rest was not quiet 15
 In the tomb until the houris greeted him
 The Banu Ishaq were generous in patience for him
 For great ones are patients in great matters
 To every distress but yours there is comparison
 For every loss except his there is an equal
 One day the sword's hilt was in his right hand
 The handclasp of death was too short for him
 Long did they bathe with the red liquor
 Skulls and breast bones at his sword edges
 I make free his brothers, by the lord Muhammad 20
 Lest they grieve, for Muhammad is happy
 Or lest they prefer their palaces to the tomb
 Where Munkar and Nakir wish him well
 People, when the scabbard is free of their swords
 Then the last day of the enemy is at hand
 When they meet an army it is certain that it
 Is resurrected from bellies of desert birds
 Bridles of their horses are not turned in pursuit
 Rather the lives of those pursued are cut off
 I sought their distant home as the goal because 25
 The beloved is visited from afar by slaves
 I was satisfied with the meeting and first glance
 For a little bit of the beloved is much.

The sons of the uncle of the dead man asked him to reply
to reproaches made against them and he spoke impromptu.
(119)

Is there for Ibrahim's people after Muhammad
Anything but eternal longing and sighs?
A wise man in their affairs has no doubt that
After him comfort for them is forbidden
The tears make their cheeks bloody; the watches
Of thir nights pass and they are ages
O sons of the uncle every sin in this matter is 30
Pardonable but not slander against them
The gossips dart on the purity of their love
Like flies that are hovering over the food
I was lavish toward Abu Husain in love and this
My bounty to his enemies was squandering
A king who attained what he wanted as if
Eternal decree came by decisions of judgment.

50 And he spoke also refuting the slander against them.
(121)

For what changes of destiny do we criticize them
For which of his griefs do we seek revenge?
Gone is one we lost with our patience at his loss
For he gave courage but patience is far away
He raided the enemy with dust clouds in the sky
His spearheads on their flanks were the stars
They flee from him and it is as if the swords
Whose edges become dull are the beaten ones
They rose like suns and scabbards were the east 5
For them, while skulls of men were the west
The scattering attacks are united as calamity
He does not stop until other attacks follow
Those unrelated to him mourn our father's brother
We were distant and yet the nearest relatives
It is plain that the gossips wanted his death
If not may the swords visit his sideburns
Is it not wonderful that among a father's sons
A child of the Jews should creep as scorpion?
O indeed was not the passing of Muhammad 10
A proof that he could not overcome Allah?

51 He spoke praising Husain ibn Ishaq al Tanukhi. (122)

This is parting when the party of men won't delay
When, O heart, you are among those who depart
We arose and what increased grief was our standing
As two parts of love: each beloved and lover

The eyelids have already become red with weeping
 And the roses became yellow on the cheeks
 Because of this men perished, united and parted
 The dead and newborn, the hated and loved
 My condition changed and my nights in their way 5
 I grew gray but youthful time does not age
 Ask deserts: What are jinn to us in their midst
 And one with Mahris where the male ostrich is?
 On many a dark night the desert seemed to reveal
 To us your face and there it was our guide
 Its dusk has no end but for a light in your face
 Nor would riding beasts go, except a camel
 The jogging put sleep to flight until it seemed
 I was drunk in the stirrups, a worn-out cloak
 They chant of Ibn Ishaq al Husain and the saddle 10
 And its pillow shake hands with their necks
 Of one who when he walks the earth its hair stands
 And the towering mountains are made to quake
 A youth, a dark cloud he is feared and hoped for
 Its rain is hoped for and his thunder feared
 But yet these pass while he is true of character
 They betray our hopes but he is ever faithful
 You are aloof from worldly society, but not absent
 From the thought of him are its west and east
 He feeds his Indian swords with heads and necks 15
 These are their combs and these the collars
 Because of them garments are rent when he is at war
 And by them the beards and the hair are dyed
 He whose death is unheeded by him is far from them
 But he suffers them whose soul is divorced from him
 One reasons by him: Who speaks if he is silent?
 He is mute but his sword speaks for his mouth
 I did not know you when my wonder lasted long
 But no wonder in beauty that Allah creates
 It was as if in giving you were a hater of wealth 20
 And in every battle you were a lover of death
 O short is the time they stay due to their fate
 The lance and war horse that are used by you
 May Allah hide and veil this beauty with a veil
 If you shine maidens melt in their tents
 The dark will be shamed by you while the stars gleam
 Caravans guided by you as long as dawn glows
 Destiny does not support those whom you forbid
 Nor do the fates forbid those whom you support
 The days do not break apart what you have joined 25
 Nor do the days join what you have broken
 The best, I cannot seek any wealth other than yours
 Nor stay elsewhere than here in Latakia
 This is the farthest goal and your face is reward
 Your house the world and you all its people.

him, though someone else had done it. So he reproached Muhammad ibn Ishaq and spoke. (127)

Do you not recognize me as a brother O Ibn Ishaq
 And do you think others' water is from my jar?
 Would I speak ridicule of you after my knowledge
 That you were the best of those under heaven?
 And the most bitter tasting of the sword's edges
 And the sharpest in matters of law courts?
 My years have not reached more than twenty years
 So why should I be bored with this long life?
 Why would I drown your description in my praise 5
 And then scant any bit of it by a mockery?
 But grant, I said, that this dawn is a night
 Are the people who know blinded from the light?
 You subdued the jealous and you are a man
 For whom I am ransom and they are my ransom
 My own satire is for those who do not distinguish
 Between my word and that of the worthless
 Indeed it is surprising that you have seen me
 And equated me with the smallest dust specks
 I am ignorant of their death and I am Suhail 10
 I bring the death of these sons of harlots.

53 He spoke also praising Husain ibn Ishaq al Tanukhi.
 (128)

The blame of distance in its evil is extreme evil
 Perhaps it has some of the sickness I have
 If not jealous it would not prevent meeting you
 If not desirous it would not be my rival
 Will the fawn be gracious enough to return who
 Made a gift of a first shower without a second?
 I sucked her lips at dawn and it was as if
 I sucked warmth of love from cool saliva
 A girl whose necklace is like her speech and 5
 Whose smile is pearly in beauty and harmony
 The smell of her breath and incense and Qarqafa
 Of aged vintage both in aroma and in taste
 Rude to me as if I wasn't most eloquent in her clan
 And bravest with a grey horse who seems black
 My death is cautious as if I were its death
 When a serpent stung me my poison killed it
 Length of the Rudaini, my blood is what breaks it
 Brightness of the Suraiji, my flesh cuts it
 A night journey trims me thin as a knife so that 10
 My body wavers lighter than my breath on a horse
 More sharp sighted than Zarqa of Jawa since
 When my eyes look my knowledge equals them
 As if I covered the earth with my knowledge of it
 As if Alexander built the wall with my resolve

To meet Ibn Ishaq whose understanding is keen
 It amazes as it glows with fineness of wit
 Listen to his words which are a speech that
 Charms my ears even if it includes my blame
 The right hand of the Banu Qahtan is Qudha's head 15
 Their nose the moon of Banu Fahm's stars
 When you meet the enemy at night their hearing
 Has the spears' whistle before bridles' jingle
 Conqueror of the strong, comforter even if he comes
 To orphan them; bereaver, a helper of orphaned
 If his spear brings sickness to hearts yet those
 Who are touched have healing from poverty by him
 Girded with despotic double edges he judges
 The skulls, except that it is unfair judgment
 He has had enough of the sparing of blood as if he 20
 Saw his own death in leaving heads on bodies
 We found ibn Ishaq al Husain like his grandfather
 In the number of his battles free from sin
 And in resolution until he intends to abandon it
 Then his leaving it makes resolve stick firmly
 And so in war if he were to desire a retreat
 His retreat has the noble nature of progress
 His is mercy that brings bones to life, and anger
 That has surplus for sin rather than sinner
 He has a kindly face if you imprint a glance 25
 On his cheeks a trace of the print is not lost
 His beauty attracts maidens who do not relish me
 But he is chaste and repays their shunning me
 Ransom are those in the dust, first of whom am I
 For this noble one of glory, excellent prince
 His sword intervened between jinn and believers
 So no danger from Arabs or Persians after jinn
 He scares them if they but look at his armor
 They melt in fear without fire or coal
 Bounteous! if his bounty were not a non-drinker's 30
 One would say: Noble! The vine's daughter gives it
 We obey you in eternal fealty, O son of ibn Yusuf,
 With our desires in spite of the jealous ones
 We trust in what you give and if you do not give
 We think by force of habit you have given
 I was acclaiming your praise in every assembly
 One thought he named my praise of you as my name
 You tempted me with gifts I had not yet received
 The like of before, until I desired the stars
 Whenever you conquer a warrior you share with me 35
 Measure the gold for me once by his wound
 Yemeni magnanimity drives off my blame from you
 You yourself attack by it forever in battle
 How many talkers if they owned such a person
 Would make its mask covering for a huge army?
 Many a thought is revolved by the earth in wonder
 Of me as a man who walks with my weight of mind

You are great when one does not address you in fear
 You are humble, a greatness bigger than pride.

- 54 He entered the house of Ali ibn Ibrahim al Tanukhi
 and he offered him a cup in which was a dark drink.
 So he spoke impromptu. (135)

Whenever the cup makes the hands tremble
 I sober up so it is not twixt me and myself
 I flee the wine that is like refined gold
 My wine is water of the clouds like silver
 I am jealous of the glass which flows
 Over the lips of the Emir Abu Husain
 As if its brightness and the wine in it
 Were whiteness of eye around a dark pupil
 We came to him seeking liberality
 Then he sought the same as payment for it.

- 55 So he drank it and then said about it. (136)

The pure wine wishes health to you Ibn Ibrahim
 Enjoy it as a drinker among drunken toppers
 I saw the nectar in the glass in his hand
 I compared it to the sun in the moon in the sea
 Whenever we think of his bounty it is present
 Far or near it runs on the feet of al Khidr.

- 56 And he spoke also praising Ali ibn Husain al Tanukhi.
 (137)

Is it a single one or is it six of them in one
 Our little night suspended till the trump?
 As if the daughters of rising in their darkness
 Were virgins unveiled in mourning dress
 I keep thinking about the perseverance of fate
 And the reins of the horse high on the neck
 My will is a guarantee to the Khatti lances
 For shedding blood of city and desert
 How long this falling behind and falling short
 For how long this stretching out of the goal?
 Occupying the self in the search for the heights
 In selling verses in a stagnant market
 And the passing of youth cannot be recovered
 Nor the day that is gone be brought back
 Whenever the eyes see the white hair of age
 They find it in their pupils as blindness
 When I go on living after my extreme limit
 Then my decline coincides with my increase

Shall I be content that I live and am unsatisfied 10
 With what there is of favor with the Emir?
 May Allah reward the journey to him with good
 Even if a camel is left like empty water bag
 My hardened camel will not meet Ibn Ibrahim
 With blood in her to feed a tick for a day
 Was there not between us a distant waste land
 Whose length became the width of a sword belt?
 It made far our distance by a space of closeness
 Brought near our closeness as near as removal
 And so when I came to him he raised my position 15
 He seated me above the seven heavens
 He rejoices before my greeting is made to him
 He gives of his wealth before the pillow is set
 O Ali we can never blame you for any sin
 Except as you detract from all creatures
 And as for you your gifts are offered as
 Generosity lest some should call them bounty
 As if your liberality were Islam making you fear
 Punishment of renegades if you should change
 It is as if the skulls in the battle were eyes 20
 And your swords sealed them with sleep
 You have inclined the spear heads of desire
 They vibrate nowhere except in the heart
 On that day you guided the dusty maned ones
 With their tails knotted up for the pursuit
 And destruction circles with them over men
 Among whom the wrongdoers of Ad at Latakia
 And so on the west there was its sea of water
 And on the east was the sea of horses
 And in it the banners fluttered for you 25
 And perpetually foamed with swords of steel
 They met you with the stubborn livers of camels
 You drove them and edge of sword was driver
 And you tore the garment of rebellion from them
 And dressed them with the garment of guidance
 But they did not leave the command by choice
 Nor did they profess your love out of love
 They did not submit to discipline of the Exalted
 Nor were they led joyfully by leadership
 But yet your fear blew in their breasts 30
 The blowing of a wind in the legs of locusts
 They died before the time of their death and when
 You favored them they returned before Judgment
 You make sheaths for swords if they do not repent
 You erase them with them as one erases ink
 But this recent rage even if it is strong cannot
 Be equal to an inherited generosity
 Do not let the tongues of counselors deceive you
 Their hateful hearts make them fickle
 So be like death do not pity the weeper 35
 He weeps due to it and waters and is thirsty
 For the wound will swell after that time
 When the scab has grown over the sore

And the water will flow from the rock
 And the fire will come out of the flint
 And how should the coward spend the night in bed
 When you spread around it tragacanth thorns?
 He sees in his sleep your spears in his food
 And he fears that he will see it at waking
 I was happy O Abu Husain while praising people 40
 I settled with them but left without reward
 Once they thought that I was praising them
 But you were my meaning when I praised them
 As for me after tomorrow I am gone from you
 Yet my heart will not depart from your courts
 Your lover wherever my steed turns itself
 And your guest wherever I am in any land.

57 He spoke also praising Ali Ibrahim al Tanukhi. (143)

O long lasting rain make thirsty these quarters
 Or else pour on them liquid poison
 I inquire about its wandering inhabitants
 But it doesn't know and won't shed tears
 May Allah curse it except for its past times
 Of pleasure and the playful girl
 Most gracious and inaccessible with heavy hips
 Her words would attract the birds to stop
 Her buttocks let her dress fall free from her 5
 And keep space between her double necklaces
 When she sways you watch the movement of it
 If it were not for her arms it would come off
 The stitching hurts her but the stitching is soft
 Compared to the hurt of a sharpened sword
 Her arms are enemies to her bracelets
 Her bedmate thinks her forearm is his bedmate
 It is as if her veil were a thin cloud
 That shades the rising moon as it glows
 I say to her: Show me my distress. And my words 10
 Are more humble than her coquetry
 Do you fear Allah in resurrecting a soul?
 When does Allah rebel at anyone's submitting?
 Every abandoned, mad lover has come to you
 And every shameless veiled one has appeared
 I will love you till they say ants have dragged
 Thubair or till Ibn Ibrahim is afraid
 Far famed are the sorties of the cavalry
 His memory makes the sucking child grow gray
 He casts down his eyes in artifice and cunning 15
 As if he was and yet was not submissive
 When you ask him to give you what is in his hand
 It is enough to ask a secret for it to be told
 Your acceptance of his gift is a gift to him
 If it does not occur he sees it as rejection

In scorn of wealth he spreads the leather carpet
 And at the dividing he hates to put it by
 When the Emir strikes off the heads of people
 He spreads a carpet but not for bounty
 For he gives no gifts except when they are many 20
 Nor does he execute any but the noble
 He does not teach except with the sword edge
 The sword is enough for the work of the whip
 Ali is the one who does not forbid any antagonist
 To show himself; he only forbids him return
 Ali who kills the champion, the ransomed one
 Exchanging his corselet for one of blood
 Then he bends the lance against its bearers
 And it fastens one rib to their other ribs
 And the liver makes its retaliation on it 25
 For it is there that it bursts or splits
 So avoid him in the meeting of the two horsemen
 Unless you are the fiercest of panthers
 If you venture to gaze at him from afar
 You are able to do something which no one can
 And if you disbelieve me then get on a horse and
 Imagine him; you will fall dead before him
 He is a cloud, often he rains vengeance
 So his shower makes sterile fertile land
 He saw me after the camel was exhausted 30
 Going to him with saddle straps worn through
 His river flowed over my land to make a pool
 His goodness made my year all spring
 He endowed me with what he gave and what I took
 His gifts drowned my grasp with swiftness
 Shall I not forget Sukun and Hadrhamaut
 And my mother and Kinda and Sabih
 You have gone the limit in plunder of the enemy
 So return them their sleep from the plunder
 Whenever you do not send any army against them 35
 You take captive their hearts with fear
 They consent to you as one consents to gray hair
 Compelled to the white forelock and tresses
 Not unarmed even when you are without weapons
 Your glance has something in it which forbids
 Or if you put in place of the sword your mind
 You cut with breastplate and chain mail
 If you have exhausted your efforts in battle yet
 You can overcome all the world with them
 You rose by ambition so rise and continue to rise 40
 For you do not find content in any degree
 Grant you are generous until none is generous
 Yet how do you rise until there is no height?

58 And he spoke also praising Ali ibn Ibrahim al Tanukhi.
 (148)

Aims: the first traces to be erased by your tears
 The past the most recent thing from their time
 Yet the people must stay with their kings
 Arabs are not lucky whose kings are foreigners
 There is no culture among them and no respect
 No covenants for them and no loyalties
 In every land that you have trod the people
 Are ruled by slaves as if they were sheep
 One thinks the silk rough when he wears it 5
 But the rush was worn out by his toenail
 As for me, even when I blamed those who envied me
 I did not deny what a plague I was to them
 Why should not a man like a high peak be envied
 Who has advanced over the heads of all
 The more polite sort of men fear him for this
 And heroes dread the edge of his sword
 For I am a man who has had enough of blame
 The noblest possession I own is generosity
 Wealth harms the avaricious if only they knew 10
 As poverty can never harm them
 They belong to their wealth and not it to them
 And the shame remains while wounds heal
 Whoever is seeking glory let him be like Ali
 He gives a thousand while he is smiling
 He jousts the horsemen and each stroke pierces
 There is no pain in them since they are swift
 He is acquainted with an event before it occurs
 Nor does he have a regret after it happens
 Command and denial, long-tailed horses and swords 15
 They are his as well as slaves and partisans
 And those attacks which you have heard about
 Almost the mountains are broken by them
 He respects what you say as listener to plaintiff
 And yet he is deaf to any foul language
 He shows you in his character his rarities
 How spirit is created with glory such as his
 I went to one who, almost between the two of you
 If you were suppliants, would divide himself
 After the shaping of a gift from him there was 20
 For one I loved: earrings and bracelets
 No hand is so generous as what he lavishes
 No mouth is guided to what he speaks
 The tribe of the fierce Mahatta are lions
 And their spears are made into the lair
 A people for whom the maturity of the boys is
 Thrusting at breasts of warriors, not puberty
 It seems as if bounty is born with them
 No little one is excused nor any old men
 When they follow an enemy they make it known 25
 When they do a good action they keep it hid
 You would think from your losing count of them
 That they do favors and do not know it
 When they flash lightning then death is present
 And when they reason it is correct and wise

Or swear a solemn oath and struggle with it
 They say, as an oath: May my client fail!
 Or if they ride on horseback without a saddle
 Truly their thighs have determination
 Or if they are present in fierce battle they take 30
 Of the souls in armor what they think best
 Their ideals and inclinations shine like the dawn
 As if the nature of them were in their souls
 Except for you I would not have left Buhaira
 For Gaur is hot and its waters were cool
 And the waves were like foaming horses
 They rumble there with no reins on them
 The birds above the trough of the waves seem to be
 Piebald horses whose bridles have been broken
 As if it, while the winds drive them about, 35
 Were an army in battle pursuing and pursued
 As if it in the daylight were a moon and
 The darkness of gardens surrounding it
 Soft is its body and there are no bones in it
 It has daughters but it has no womb
 Its belly gives forth with these continually
 It does not complain and it does not bleed
 Always the birds make music on its shores
 The showers enrich the gardens about her
 And so it is like a mirror encircled 40
 The top of its cover has been laid bare
 But its people in the towns disgrace it
 Bastardy and vile origin are a disgrace
 O Abu Husain, listen, because your praise
 Is in acts before words are arranged in verse
 The first showers are friendly to you in this
 And the rains that impregnate are bounteous
 I make you safe from vicissitudes of your time
 For it is that which is ruinous to generosity.

59 And he spoke praising al Mughith Ali al Ajli. (154)

A tear flows and fulfills duty in this abode
 To its people; but heal me and no grief?
 Turn aside for parting dispatches what is left us
 Of sanity and what is gone will not return
 I water it with tears, one would think them rain
 Their flow from the eyes one would think clouds
 This camp of visits has a ghost that threatens me
 Nightly, and my eyes neither believe nor deny
 I move and it approaches, I come near and it goes 5
 I warm and it rises, I kiss and it rejects
 The heart longs for an Arab girl who dwells
 In a heart's tent whose ropes she did not set
 Crime against the waist to liken it to a sapling
 Wrong done to saliva to compare it to honey

White, one longs for what is under her dress
 But it is hard to attain when it is sought
 As if she were the sun whose beam eludes the hand
 Of a grasper though the eye sees it near
 She passed by us with her maids and I said to her 10
 Of what people is this young bedouin deer?
 She smiled and then said: Like Mughith who seems
 A lion of thickets but his ancestry is Ajli.
 She brought bravest of those named, most generous
 Of givers, finest of composers and writers
 If his thought settles on the crippled they walk
 On fools they know or the dumb they speak
 When he appears, respect for him veils your eyes
 But no curtain hides him when he draws a veil
 The bright face makes the sun seem dark to you 15
 A pearl in a word seems like an egg pearl
 A sword of decision whose motion repels a sword
 With dripping edge stained with heart's blood
 The life of an enemy if he meets him in the dust
 Is less than goods' life when he makes gifts
 Watch out for him or if you wish to prove him
 Become his enemy or some possession of his
 His taste is sweet until, when he is angry,
 It changes; if it drips in water do not drink
 The earth covets the place where he settles 20
 And horses are jealous of those he rides on
 He rejects with his mouth no hand of a suppliant
 From himself yet he refuses a loud army
 And whenever two dinars meet as his friends
 In his hand they part before they are friends
 Wealth, it's as if a raven of parting watched it
 It shrieks each time one says: He is a client.
 A sea whose marvels are not told in evening talk
 Nor marvels in the sea after these marvels
 The gaining of a place does not satisfy Ibn Ali 25
 If a seeker complains of effort or default
 The Banu Ajli unfurl the banner for him and he is
 Their chief and all become their followers
 They are the ones who abandon the easy things
 They are the ones who try what is difficult
 The armor of their horses is swords that take
 Skulls of warriors as bait for their spears
 If the fates meet them they stand still
 Fearfully desiring both advance and retreat
 Theirs is rank which is high and thought follows 30
 On its trail as it goes beyond the stars
 The praise exhausts my verse trying to fill it
 So it returns unfilled by it and not yet dry
 Yours is nobility which surpasses the world
 Who is able to attain a thing that is fleeting?
 And when you stay in Antioch there are riders who
 Come again and again with news to me in Aleppo
 When I go to you I don't turn aside for anyone
 I spur on my two camels: poverty and culture

35

60 He spoke praising al Muhghith ibn Ali ibn Bashhar al
Ajli. (160)

5

10

15

May Allah grant that the brother of nobility pour 20
 For me a drink, not weaning for his suckling
 A person, one of whose benefits is giving
 And one whose single gift is endless
 The times have hidden him on our account
 As a necklace hides the string of the pearls
 Manliness delights him even when it injures one
 And he who loves delights even in longing
 He belongs to it with the love of Qais for Laila
 And embraces it but no sickness is in him
 He scares the grave ones and melts the sprightly 25
 So one doesn't know--is he an elder or youth?
 Problems possess him with respect to bounty
 But he has no success in any argument
 Acceptance of his gifts is honor and glory
 But taking gifts of some people is blame
 Many a gift of his stands out on the necks
 They are the collar and men are the dove
 When the generous are counted the sum is the Ajli
 Like stars that rise and set to make a year
 What is on their shoulders defends their foreheads 30
 When the blows grow hot on the edges of it
 And if you approach them on judgment day for gifts
 They will give what they prayed and fasted for
 Though they are clement, the horses among them
 Are swift and their spears contentious
 And with them the meat platters are crowned
 And jousting right and left and double blows
 We bring them down in blushes with our glances
 But arrows are blunted by their faces
 They are a tribe that bears the highest things 35
 Like the bony structure bears the body
 A tribe of which you are a part yet you are you
 As your cheer is human, royal and heroic
 Whose is this wealth which giving tears to pieces?
 All creatures share in his huge bounty
 We do not call you its lord and that pleases
 For with lordship protection is a duty
 It is stripped off as if you were a Samaritan
 A hand with leprosy to be shaken hands with
 Whenever the learned come to you they say: 40
 Be ransom for us O instructed leader.
 Whenever the flag bearers see you they say:
 By this one the vast army is guided.
 The season is made fine by you until it is
 As if you are the smile on the mouth of time
 You made a gift of that which creature never gave
 The blessing of your lord on you and peace.

61 He spoke praising Abu Faraj Ahmad ibn al Husain al
 Qadi al Maliki. (166)

A jinn or a maiden on which the curtain is raised!
 Or a wild deer, no, the deer has no earrings
 She is shy, soldiers scared her since her neck
 And beads, her waist and buttocks are heavy
 Her silk dress makes us think of them as if
 A sapling bent to us, a gazelle looked at us
 Increase of white hair is loss of my excess
 And the power of love weakens my strength
 She who has the passion I have makes my blood flow 5
 My passion and my love and hers are a bond
 And who each time I strip her of her clothes
 Draws to herself another dress of soft hair
 The buds of the willow branch come near me
 A moon bends over and a sandhill restrains it
 Is it a trick on us O separation that you persist?
 Our homes are not closer, our lives not clear
 I'd repeat Alas if only Alas would end the need
 I'd re-echo Too bad if Too bad healed thirst
 The sickness of love is like poison hid in honey 10
 I, unwitting, enjoyed it and joy was death
 It strove and my soul could not avoid it until
 Abu'l Faraj the Qadi became a shelter from it
 Little sleep is his and if sword and spear were
 His ideas no helmet or armor would hold
 A frown on his face takes the place of an army
 A letter of his word exceeds words
 If he loses a bestowal his right hand yearns
 For it, as friend who leaves longs for friend
 Cultured peaks root in his breast's soil of wisdom 15
 Earth's mountains are hills beside that
 Liberal one, his hand aspires in good and evil
 On high, so fate wishes its name were hand
 He appears and among men every ruler
 Of men finds disagreement except in his rule
 They are his ransom until it is as if their blood
 Waited in their veins for flow of his love
 Waiting upon waiting in thanks and giving
 His gifts a bequest and their thanks a bequest
 When we lost the like of him our search was long 20
 For him but loss stayed and search uncovered
 Imagination is not more excited by the greatness
 Of such as him than the eye is by his beauty
 And rage and evil give no more out of envy of him
 Than goodness will give out of his bounty
 His thought is knowledge and his discourse wisdom
 Within religion and without graciousness
 He destroys winds of blame and they are storms
 A high camp lost and bounty's traces erased
 Before Ibn Husain we never saw such fingers that 25
 As they shower put to shame thick rainclouds
 Nor ever such a busy one achieving a peak of glory
 With his acts that description cannot reach
 Nor seen any bearing a heavy load as he bears it
 He belittles the world yet a horse bears him

Never has the deep sea sat still for its clients
 Beneath it a carpet and above it a roof
 O wonder for me that I attempt his description
 For writing and pages have withered before it
 From a profusion of stories about his good deeds 30
 One kind passes away and another kind comes
 They smile with the qualities that are his like
 Teeth of a beloved whose moisture never tires
 I made you my goal and those who hoped it was them
 Were many but a tail is not like the nose
 Nor is bright silver and refined gold the same
 In their use to the poor but both can be spent
 You are not small, a shower fears its smallness,
 Nor an end of bounty beyond which is another
 You are not just one among the men of society 35
 Nor some among all but rather double them
 Nor yet double when the double follows its double
 Nor twice twice double, nor like a thousand
 O our Qadi this is the family of which you are--
 I make a mistake, this is not a third or a half
 My sin is my remissness but I did not bring praise
 As my sin, rather I come to ask forgiveness.

62 He spoke praising Ali ibn Mansur the Hajib. (172)

By my father! the suns are declining to the west
 The ones who are wearing their silken veils
 Those who plundered our hearts and our reasons
 With their cheeks that sack the plunderers
 The soft ones, the killers, bringers back to life
 Who make appear the signs of coquetry
 They try to say farewell but they fear the guard
 So they put their hands above their breasts
 They smiled with cool teeth that I feared to melt 5
 With the heat of my sighs for I was melting
 O well for those who saddle up and well for the
 Valleys where I veiled myself from a virgin sun
 What hope is there to be free of these calamities
 After they have fixed their claws in me?
 They have isolated me and united with a grief
 Extreme, for they have made it master of me
 They have set me up as target for arrows to hit
 Suffering sharper than the edges of swords
 The world made me thirsty when I came to it 10
 Seeking drink, and she poured her trouble on me
 I got in place of a hollow-eyed dark-hoof camel
 Sheepskins, so I started as a goer on foot
 Such a state that if Ibn Mansur knew of it
 Time would come to me repentant due to it
 A king whose lance head and whose fingers
 One rivals in blood and bounty's flow

He thinks great matters small for his retainers
 And thinks the Dijla is not enough to drink
 He is noble and if you told him about himself 15
 And great things done he would think you lie
 Ask about his bravery and visit him in peace
 But beware and beware again of him in war
 For death is known by description of his nature
 He makes no creature taste death twice
 If you meet him you will meet him only in an army
 Or in the dust or in jousting or slashing
 Or in fleeing or in pursuing or in desiring
 Or in dreading or in agonizing or lamenting
 And when you look at the mountains you see them 20
 Above the plain as spears and swords
 And when you look at the plains you see them
 Below mountains as horsemen and squires
 And the steel stands out in the darkening dust
 Like negro smiling or gray locks of hair
 Whenever day is dressed with it there is dark
 Of night, and the lances bring up the stars
 Misfortunes make an army with it as an army
 And men form battalions with it as conscripts
 He leads away a lion whose prey is lions 25
 He is a lion for whom the lions are foxes
 As for rank, men are kept from attaining it
 He is eminent so they call him Ali the keeper
 They call him from excess of generosity the lavish
 They call him from conquest of souls conqueror
 He is the one who expends gold in making gifts
 His enemies are dead and fate put to the test
 He disappoints the critics in what they hoped
 From him but he denies no hand with refusal
 That which you see of him when he is present 30
 Is like that which you see of him when absent
 Like the moon wherever you turn you see it
 He guides to your eyes a piercing beam
 Like the sea he throws up jewels for those nearby
 As bounty, and sends the distant clouds
 Like the sun at its zenith in heaven and its light
 Overwhelming the land in the east and west
 O you make their bounty base born and despised
 And leave all the liberal people with censure
 They show their virtues and you show your honor 35
 Their virtue is found disgraceful by that
 I am here for you O permanent rage of the envious
 Truly we witness wonders from your bounty
 Order owning experience thinks of the morrow
 But onslaughts of fools do not fear outcomes
 As for a rich gift if a client turns away from it
 You expend it in searching for a recipient
 Take of my praise for you what it is worth but
 What is fit in praise is not expected of me
 I am astonished at what you do, for less than it 40
 Astonishes the guardian angels who write.

- 63 He spoke praising Amr ibn Sulaiman al Sharabi who at that time was superintending the ransoms between the Rum and the Arabs. (177)

We knew parting serious but high clouds are more
 And we suspect gossips and tears from them
 He whose heart is with another, what is his state?
 Whose secret is in his eyes, how can he hide it?
 When we met and the distance and our guard were
 Forgetful of us yet I wept and you smiled
 I had not seen a moon smiling before her face
 And before me you had not seen the dead talk
 One hurt by love, like her back is by her thighs 5
 With waning strength he complains of her acts
 With hair bringing back night though dawn flames
 A face bringing back dawn in dark night
 And if my heart were her home it would be empty
 But yet the army of love there is immense
 The hearthstones are there fired like the heart
 The traces destroyed like my body emaciate
 I wet my gown there and the shower helped me
 Its tears were pure and in my tears was blood
 If what flowed over my cheeks had not been blood 10
 The trickle would not be red nor I be sick
 By my soul the dream has visited me after a sleep
 Its word was: After us can you savor dozing?
 Good-by! If fear and greed were not part of it
 We would say that Abu Hafsa had said goodbye
 A lover of bounty longs to lavish his wealth
 Passionately as the enslaved lover makes love
 I swear if there were not in every hair of him
 A lion we would say of him: You are a lion.
 Don't we diminish his joy since he is more than it? 15
 We decry him and disparaging is forbidden
 He exceeds comparison for his hand is no sea
 Nor he a lion or his thoughts swords
 Nor his wounds healed or his holes seen
 Nor can his edges be dulled or notched
 Nor any matter be tied up which he has untied
 Nor any matter loosed which he has knotted
 He does not trail his skirts out of self-conceit
 Nor does he serve the world but it serves him
 He desires no permanency and his giving destroys 20
 Nor is the enemy safe from him but he is safe
 Sweeter than wine with water the mention of him
 Better than fortune when a poor man meets him
 More scarce than the anka among birds is his equal
 More rare than that one he denies as his client
 More supplied with gifts after the giving
 Than showers after showers in continual rain
 High in bounty, if he saw the sleep of his eyes
 As avarice he would swear he would not doze
 If he said: Bring a dirham I have not yet given 25
 To a client--there'd be no such dirham for men

And if what delights him troubled men before him
 His bravery and generosity affect him most
 He pours juice of the mulberry in every raid
 With a sheath's bright orphan and he orphans
 Ransom price not put off from his saddle for a day
 Saddled horse bridled after going on a raid
 He crosses lands of Rum, and a swamp is bright
 With his swords but air is black with dust,
 To the king of the tyrants and how many regiments 30
 Encounter him as their death and they know it?
 How many virgins of the Christians show to him
 Fair cheeks that soon will be clawed?
 Rows for a lion among lions whose protection
 Is in backs of stallions and upright spears
 The fates are absent from them when he is absent
 And approach their camps when he approaches
 Restored by you many a captive remains unbound
 Live Ibn Sulaiman and the wealth he shares!
 He rewards you who gave his messenger's religion 35
 As a gift, hand and mouth cannot attain thanks
 Be gentle for if you are not merciful to yourself
 In giving yet you are granted mercy
 Your home is the goal and your enemies speechless
 Your rivals lost and your gifts myriad
 Visiting you for me is putting aside the kings
 When the sea appears the dust is not for me
 So live for if slaves are ransom for a lord from
 Death, you are not lost and earth is at peace.

64 He spoke praising Abd al Wahid ibn Abbas ibn Abu al Asbai the Katib. (182)

O those camels of the beloved! truly these tears
 Beat the cheeks like they pound the stones
 For they know her whom parting has loaded on you
 And they go softly with obedient bridle
 Once it was shame that forbade me to weep
 But today weeping forbids the prohibition
 Until it is as if there is a sob for every bone
 Under its skin and in every vein tears
 For one to seduce the fawn there is enough light 5
 For its lovers and my being slain in this way
 She unveils but parting veils her with paleness
 Veils her eye hollows though there is no veil
 It's as if it with the tears dripping over it,
 Were gold, a double thread of pearls inset
 She displays those three locks of her hair
 To night and they show my night as a fourth
 She confronts the moon in the sky with her face
 And shows me the two celestial lights at once
 Restore my embrace as a cloud waters your camp 10
 If your embrace were like it, it would not end

Thunder shows you the sky's lightning, the plain
 Like a sea, and the hills a fertile meadow
 Like the fingers of Abd al Wahid flowing which
 Gush and shelter one who longs but fears
 He was familiar to manliness from youth as if he
 Had it with milk he sucked in infancy
 His gifts are considered charms on his account
 One is used to them so if lost one fears
 He leaves good deeds like swords that flash 15
 And the high acts like spears at the ready
 Smiling to his clients a gracious smile
 Its flashes cover the blazing lightning
 Revealing to his enemies an impetuous bound
 And if its shoulders touch the sky it shakes
 The determined; wakeful, the strong in knowledge
 The prudent, warlike, generous and brilliant
 A writer and brisk, persuasive and bounteous
 Understanding, reasonable, imperious, eloquent
 A soul whose are the people of the times since 20
 He is waster of souls, separating the gathered
 Gifts that have the bounty of rainclouds for he
 Pours out on settled land and waste places
 Forever he is splitting huge masses collected
 Gathering masses of generosity to be split
 He rejoices in gifts with the rejoicing of a sword
 On hope's day his joy is as on battle day
 O enrichment, meeting him is hope to a poor man--
 His prayer after a service when he prays
 Stop! but you do not stop till the goal is passed 25
 You go where stars beneath you bring content
 You have settled in the places where acts are high
 Such a place neither men nor jinn settle in
 You seized their excellence and what delights men
 In it, but no man has joy in what delights him
 Judgment is executed by what you desire as if it
 Were yours; when you decide a matter so it is
 The stubborn fate submits to you as if it were
 A slave when you call: Come here swiftly.
 Your honor devours the boaster, and the camels 30
 Of my art limpas they turn from their goals
 They run the course of the sun in their sky
 And cross to its west and outpass the orient
 If the world were linked to another such as this
 You would imbue it and, I fear, not be content
 And if one were to deny claims for you beyond this
 Allah witnesses the truth of what is claimed
 When a speaker gives evidence of your condition
 He keeps little things among many estates
 If a hero is claimed to be no other than such 35
 A rajul, then call all other men toes
 If glory did not achieve generosity except thus
 Then rain would be the stingiest gift
 Abbas made your brightness, O his son, to follow
 As a vision for us and until resurrection.

65 He was crossing a place known as the gardens of the land of Qansarin and he heard the lions roaring and spoke. (186)

Is your neighbor noble action O lions of gardens?
 Then dwell with me or if base then good-by
 Behind me and in front of me are many enemies
 I guard against thieves both among you and them
 Are you in agreement with me in what I desire?
 For I know more about the means of livelihood
 Then your provision comes to you from each region
 And you are rich in your booty and I share.

66 He spoke praising Abd al Rahman ibn Mubarak of Antioch. (186)

A gift of departure to me and flight in union
 Returns me to illness like a waning moon
 For the body suffers a decrease and that which
 Diminishes in it increases in sadness
 Stop over the traces in the plain of Rayya
 Like a beauty spot on the cheek beside a spot
 At the deserted mounds that are like the stars
 Near the courtyards that are like the night
 And the drain trenches there as if they were 5
 Ankle rings making no noise on plump legs
 Do not blame me for I am most loving of lovers
 To her, O most censorious of reprovers
 What does distance want of the viper who has
 Tasted heat of deserts and cold of the night?
 For he is sharper in fear than the king of death
 Farther traveling in darkness than a ghost
 By a death in glory a lover is fascinated
 For a life he drags out in mean hatred
 We are riders like the jinn in human clothes 10
 On birds who have the shape of fine camels
 From among the daughters of Jadila going with us
 The gait of the days to death in the desert
 All of a good she-camel in the desert where
 It leaves a track of fire like a wick in oil
 Aiming at the full moon, the sea and the lion,
 In Ibn Mubarak who is the most excellent
 He who visits him visits Solomon in his kingdom
 Glorious, and Joseph in all of his beauty
 And like spring he smiles with showers there 15
 Flowers of thanks from gardens of eminence
 From it the east wind perfumes us with a breeze
 Bringing back the soul to the dead hopes
 A care of friends is the desire of Abd al Rahman
 And destruction of enemies and of wealth
 The greatest blame for him is stinginess but
 Jousting for him is the prototype of the lion

Wounds for him are the calls for help
 That precede his gifts to the clients
 This burning lamp, this purifier of the heart, 20
 This remnant of the deputies of the prophet
 Take the water from his feet and sprinkle it
 On cities to make safe from sudden earthquake
 Rub the cloth of his shirts you two upon
 Your sores to heal them from sickness
 Filling with his gifts the east and the west
 And with his terrors the hearts of men
 He withholds his right hand from the world
 But if he desires he takes it with his left
 He himself is his army and his acts are victory 25
 And respect for him is blades and spears
 His is a blow at the head of affluence
 Whose impact is upon the heads of heroes
 They are always in fear of him at the moment
 Of attack though it is not the day of battle
 A man whose clay is made of the red amber
 While the clay of mankind is earthenware
 What remains of his clay when it meets the water
 Brings sweetness to the cool liquid
 The stability of his good judgment estranges men 30
 But it has the firmness of the mountains
 I am not of those that your love of peace blinds
 Even if you do not seem to witness the battle
 That is something that life takes care of for you
 Your enemies are vile and few are equal
 He is forgiving but if rage turns him from that
 Their skulls are made the shoes
 For the horses that enter into battle bare
 But come out with blood as horse cloth
 The steel borrows its color and he casts 35
 Its color on the locks of the youth
 You are at times more bitter than deadly poison
 At times sweeter than freshest water
 For humanity is where you are and men are not
 Men in the place where you are absent.

67 He spoke praising Abu Ali Harun ibn Abd al Aziz al Awaraji the Katib. (191)

The guards are secure against your visits at dark
 Since where you are in the dark there is light
 Restlessness of beauty unveils her for she is musk
 And her moving in the night is the sun
 I grieve for the grief by which you deranged me
 From knowing it for by that a veil covers me
 My complaint is of the loss of a sickness
 Which existed when limbs were still mine
 You painted your eye in my mind like a wound 5
 The wideness of both of them is copied there

It pierced my fine woven armor and seldom
 The brown shafted lance broke through there
 I am a rock of the wadi dashed against by a flood
 And when I speak then I am the starry Twins
 And if I hide from the simple there is an excuse
 That the eye of the blind cannot see me
 The habits of the nights make the camel doubt:
 Is my breast broader or the waste land for her?
 She goes all night in haste hurrying on her fat 10
 Emaciation speeds her through the desert
 The saddle straps are slack and her hoofs
 Are pierced though her path is a virgin
 She changes color for fear of perishing
 There, like the chameleon changes color
 Between me and Abu Ali there are, like him,
 Mountain peaks and like them are the hopes
 And the trails of the Lubnan: how to cross them
 Since it is winter and its summer is winter?
 The snows there have obscured my paths for me 15
 As if in their whiteness they were dark
 And so the generous one when he stays in a city
 Makes the silver flow there and the water stay
 The rains froze and if the rain stars knew him,
 As they know, they'd been amazed and not shone
 There is a longing for his script in every heart
 Until it is as if his ink were passion
 For every eye there is peace in his presence
 Until it's like his absence were eyesickness
 He is guided in action which the poets cannot 20
 Guide right in speech until he acts
 On every day the coming and going is for rhymes
 In his heart, and attention is for his ear
 There are raids on what he has gathered as if
 In every verse were a band of shining heroes
 He does wrong to the stingy in charging them so
 That they become, even they, equals to him
 We blame them yet by them we know his virtue
 It is by their opposites that things are known
 One whose profit is being attacked and his hurt 25
 Is being left alone if only the enemy knew
 For peace breaks the wings of his wealth
 With his gifts and battle heals them again
 He gives and huge gifts come from his hand's gift
 Wisdom is seen by a glance at his opinions
 A separation of two tastes, a union of strengths
 It is as if he were prosperity and misfortune
 It is as if he were what his enemies do not want
 While showing to his partisans what they crave
 O one whose soul is a gift of generosity-- 30
 Since no beggar comes to him for it--
 Thank your clients, do not worry at their loss
 For a legacy of what they don't take is a gift
 The dead do not number a legion of the few
 Except when the living lament because of you

No thought is split from that which is beneath it
 Until the terror of you settles there
 You were not named O Harun till lots were drawn
 And the names were in agony with your name
 So you came but others did not share your name 35
 Yet mankind is equal in regard to your gifts
 Truly universal so the cities are filled with you
 You surpass all so that this eulogy is paltry
 You are generous until you almost become miserly
 Changing at the goal and from joy to weeping
 You originate things whose source is known by you
 And you add to it so the origin is unknown
 Honor has a balance in you for its shortcoming
 Glory is free from your asking an increase
 If you are asked it's not that you make need 40
 When you are hid your good deeds betray you
 And if you are praised it is not to gain eminence
 Praise is for those who are grateful to Allah
 If you are rained on it is not that you are dry
 Fertile land is watered and the sea rained on
 The clouds do not imitate your bounty but rather
 Are feverish for it so the downpour is sweat
 The sun of our day never confronted this face
 Except with a face that had no shame in it
 So with what a foot did you run to the heights? 45
 Surface of the moon was sole for your shoe
 The times are yours as a guard from time
 And death is yours as a ransom from death
 If you were not of humankind which is of you
 Eve would be barren in birth of her offspring.

68 He spoke describing a dog which Abu Awaraji set upon the deer and he hunted with him alone. (201)

Many a campsite has not been our resting place
 Nor for anything but the morning cloud
 Dew on the khuzami and the odor of garanful
 Dwelling place of wild beasts not settled
 There appeared to us there a deer and gazelles
 Doomed in itself it is far from rescue
 Beauty of neck does without ornament in a collar
 And the habit of nakedness without the dress
 As if he were daubed with oil of sandalwood 5
 Confronting as if with the horns of the oryx
 He comes upon the dog all of a sudden
 And the trainer loosens the tight leash
 Wide jawed with collar and chain
 Thin bellied, long, ready to spring, bite
 When they bleat at him he does not stir
 Strong of back and with muscles lithe
 His glance is straight when he turns around
 As if he were looking in a mirror

He runs where it is roughest as on a plain 10
 He chases and reaches the game and is trailed
 He sits like the bedouin who warms himself
 With four fine twisted legs without a flaw
 The front ones wide set and the back ones light
 Their tracks imprint themselves on the rocks
 By being plaited in leaping almost
 He joins the breast and the haunches
 And between his top and his bottom parts
 It's a first shower of running and a second
 It is as if he were fashioned from a stone 15
 That has been fixed on a flexible lance
 Possessed of a short haired tail that isn't docked
 It traces on the dust a florid script
 As if it were separate from his body
 If it were a feeble motion it would ruin a whip
 Desire attained, the hunter's own authority
 A hobble for deer and death for fawns
 The two oppose each other alone in the dust
 The one behind pledged death to the first
 In the dirt neither one is to be distracted 20
 He does not fail to avoid every mistake
 So he is rushing on the place of terror
 He makes a vast sea the width of a brook
 Until as one says: You've got him, at him!
 He bares the fangs like they were swords
 They do not know the work of the smith's file
 A vehicle for the pains of the Revelation
 As if they had the swiftness of the north wind
 As if they had the weight of Mount Yadbol
 As if they were of the wideness of plains 25
 As if he from his knowledge of killing
 Could teach Hippocrates the bleeding of a vein
 And change that which leaps to that which falls
 And what is in the skin becomes what is in a pot
 Nor does the lack of a falcon worry us with him
 While you remain in peace O Abu Ali the
 Kingdom is almighty Allah's and then to me.

69 And he spoke praising Badr ibn Ammar ibn Ismail al
 Asdi al Tabaristani. (206)

Is it a dream that we see or some new times
 Or does creation return in shape of living man?
 He beams upon us and makes us shine by him
 As if the stars found us in the ascendant
 We see by means of Badr and by his fathers
 The moon has a father and the moon children
 We seek his pleasure by leaving that which we
 Desire for him; that we leave prostration
 A prince who is a prince; upon him bounty depends 5
 Bounty is stingy insofar as he does not give

He speaks about his generosity with dislike
 As if he had a jealous person's heart in this
 He proceeds except in regard to fleeing
 He has power except in regard to his profit
 As if your liberality were a part of destiny
 For what you give from it we find bounteous
 Many an attack in the battle you have repelled
 With a flexible brown one dark with blood
 Many a terror you revealed, many a blade you broke 10
 Many a lance you left splintered in ruin
 Many a gift you have given without a promise
 Many a hero you outdistanced with a threat
 With a flight of your swords from their sheaths
 The necks desired that they be the scabbards
 To the skull they return from the like of it
 They see the return from a drink as a drink
 You destroy the souls of the enemy with steel
 Until you ruin the steel with their souls
 You consume that which lasts in their lives 15
 And make last what you own by consuming
 As if you from poverty desired wealth
 And from death in battle desired immortality
 This is a character that leads one to its lord
 And a sign of glory shown to the slaves
 He is upright and sweet yet he is bitter
 We scorn the sea and the lions through him
 Description is remote in spite of its nearness
 It bewilders thought and wears out the seeker
 For you are the only one of the children of Adam
 But you are not lonely for the loss of an equal.

70 He spoke praising Badr ibn Ammar ibn Ismail and he was
 sick and the doctor bled him but he let the flow go be-
 yond measure and he was harmed by it. (210)

Farthest separation from a beauty is stinginess
 It is distance which no camel will undertake
 I'm patient of what lasts that is not hers
 A weariness of lasting weariness in her
 It is as if her outline when she turns were
 Drunk from the wine of her intoxicating glance
 The buttocks pull on her below her waist
 As if they were trembling at her departure
 Mine is a heat of passion in sucking her mouth 5
 Patience leaves me when it is uninterrupted
 The lips, the breasts, the ankles and the wrists
 Are my sickness and that black hair
 And many a desert I have crossed on two feet
 A trained, strong backed camel foundered there
 With my sword girded on and with my experience
 Rewarding me, enveloped in the dark
 As for a friend I may reject his companionship
 Such changes do not worry me at his parting

There is coming and going between dawn and sunset 10
 And change in the cities of their sister
 And in the visiting of the Emir Badr ibn Ammar
 Employment apart from work for mankind
 He becomes wealth himself just as his wealth is
 For him who heeds it without hinting or asking
 The times are easy on his heart so that
 Neither grief nor frivolity shows in it
 Due to the submission of death to him almost
 He destroys one whose term has not yet come
 Due to strength of his will almost that which 15
 He does is done of itself before the action
 His qualities are made known by his eye
 As if he had anointed it with sagacity
 I tremble at the kindling of his thinking
 From that I fear he'll burst in flames
 A noble chief, his enemies when they surrender
 In flight want to boast of that which they do
 He turns to them a face of each swimming horse
 Its four legs arrive before its eyes do 20
 Short haired, filling the girth with the belly
 The tail hairs are as long as its tail bone
 If it turned its back you'd say it has no neck
 Or faced forward you'd say it has no rump
 The lance thrust twists and the earth shakes
 As if in its heart terror were struck
 The blood has already stained its cheeks as when
 Shame stains the cheek of a maiden
 The horses are weeping as their skins sweat
 With tears that the eyes do not let fall
 A leader, there is no plain for his army 25
 It's as if all the flat land were mountainous
 Lest the rain should touch them the assault
 Protects them, so thick the lances interlace
 O you are a moon O a sea O a cloud O
 A lion of the bush O death O man!
 Truly the fingers are that which ponder things
 Since you make proverbs in every place
 For you are of those people who when making gifts
 Find everything short of their lives stinginess
 Their hearts have an edge quickly unsheathed 30
 Their stature in height is a lance put in rest
 You are he who disproves his name in a dispute
 Between the Indian sword and flexible lance
 You, by my life, are Badr the shining yet you
 In the uproar of battle are dark as Zuhail
 An army is booty if you are not its lord
 A land without ornament if you adorn it not
 You are sought from its east and its west
 Until the beasts and the roads complain of you
 You leave nothing except a little good health 35
 And illness would be sent if begged of you
 The excuse for your two accidents is
 Cowardice of a doctor and bravery of a lancet

You offered a gift to the palm of the leech
 And hope did not know how to make a cut
 And if the treatment could harm the inside of it
 Often kisses oppressed the outside of it
 The bloodletting tore open its vein but
 Censure cannot split the flow of his bounty
 Fear made him slip when you stretched it out 40
 As if he were in a hurry because of his skill
 He strove to the limit of his diligence and arrived
 Without diligence; may his mother be bereft!
 Practice achieves the success that is sought for
 But in deep matters there's many a slip
 Weep for it since with what it possessed
 And what it shed it has given much to you
 The like of you O Badr does not exist nor
 Is government sound except by such as you.

71 And he spoke also praising him. (216)

My survival wishes that they would not saddle up
 That they bridle patience's beauty not camels
 They turn away suddenly and it is as if parting
 Scared me so I am surprised by deceit
 And the gait of their camels is easy paced
 But flow of tears in their track is strong
 It is as if the camel was there upon my eyelids
 Kneeling and then it arose and tears flowed
 Parting screened the gazelle maidens from me 5
 And assisted the veil and the curtain
 They wear the brocade not to be beautiful
 But rather to protect beauty with it
 They plait the braids not for the ornament
 But rather for fear the hair should go astray
 By my body! there is someone wastes it and if
 My sash were a pearl's hole it would be loose
 And if I were otherwise than asleep
 I'd spend nights thinking I was my own ghost
 She seems the moon and bends as a branch of willow 10
 She spreads amber and looks with gazelle eyes
 As if grief were madly in love with my heart
 The moment of her flight it finds an embrace
 So the world was for those who were before me
 Misfortunes did not last in its mutability
 Perplexity was strongest for me in happiness
 Its master was sure of this variability
 I have gotten used to traveling and made earth
 My saddle and my Gorair camel strong
 I have not wanted any resting place on earth 15
 And I have not decided to stop at any place
 On a swaying one as if the wind were beneath me
 I steer it to the southward or to the north

Toward the moon Ibn Ammar who is not
 A crescent moon at the first of the month
 He does not increase from any decrease in him
 He continues as Emir and he will not cease
 Without compare even if you observe in him
 The model for every remote beauty
 He is the sword of Ibn Raiq who is the hope 20
 Of the sword of al Muttqi in the day of war
 Spearhead on the Banu Ma'ad's lance that is
 The Banu Asad when they call for the attack
 Strongest of the victors in hand and in sword
 In power and in protection and in family
 Most eminent in honor for himself and his people
 Noblest in father's and mother's lineage
 He is the most worthy of the praise which is
 For the world and its people an absurdity
 Double remains of that to be said about him 25
 When one has not omitted anything to say
 O son of the thrusters with every light lance
 In places where a hero complains of a cough
 O son of the strikers with every sharp blade
 Among the Arabs both on high and below
 I see the would-be poets rage to condemn me
 But who praises sickness that can't be cured?
 And possessed of a mouth bitter with illness
 One finds bitter for him the sweetest water
 They said: Has he brought you to the Thurya stars? 30
 I said: Yes, if I want to come down to them.
 He is the destroyer, the war horse, the hostile
 The Indian steel and the long dark lance
 And their leader who teaches them briskness
 With a tribe that he overwhelms at dawn
 With horses roaming with upright spears
 As if on their shafts were flaming wicks
 When they trample the rocks with their forelegs
 They turn them to sand by force of hind legs
 The answer to one who asked me if he had an equal: 35
 No! nor is there to you if you ask, O no!
 Indeed everyone is safe from poverty through you
 They count their hope in you as wealth
 Some hearts are cautious of you until
 Their fear becomes cowardice for them
 Your happiness is to make all men happy
 You teach them familiarity to you by this
 When they make a request you thank them for it
 If they are silent you beg them to ask a favor
 Happiest is he who sees us as seekers 40
 To gain a request that he can grant
 Your arrow dispatches the man it encounters
 Like a bow released that strikes no men
 For the arrows never remain at rest
 It's as if the feathers were seeking the point
 You get ahead of the winners and do not run
 You cross the heights and do not climb

I swear that if you were on the right of a thing
 Men would never be fit for the left of it
 I am turned by you as my eye by the heavens
 And if its stars rise they are the qualities
 I am amazed at you: How were you able to grow?
 For you were given perfection in the cradle.

45

72 And he spoke impromptu about him when he was drinking
 and the fruit and narcissus were set out. (223)

Truly Badr ibn Ammar is a thunderhead
 A downpour in which is reward and punishment
 Truly Badr is a misfortune and a good fortune
 And the fates and thrusting and slashing
 He does not let sight roam unless it praise him
 By its power of giving but necks blame it
 The death of his enemies is not his worry
 He guards against disappointment to wolves
 Terror is his for those who have no fear of him
 Hoped for bounty is his that is not feared
 He pierces horsemen in eyes to right and left
 And the dust of battle is a veil to the sun
 Dispatcher of himself to the dreadful which
 Has no return for the soul which falls therein
 My father! your perfume is not from our narcissus
 Your stories are not those of this drinking
 It is not disapproved if you come out ahead
 Nor is it prohibited to the Arab horse to win.

5

73 He spoke commemorating the hunting of a lion. (224)

On the cheek since the companion decided to go
 A rain by which cheeks increase sterility
 O evil glance you destroy sleep and you leave
 On my heart's edge what I feel as dullness
 It had some of the kohl of my request but
 My death depicted the request in my heart
 I find abstinence for the like of you manliness
 And patience fine except for your absence
 And I saw your many coqueties as loveable
 And I saw a little coquetry as wearying
 The camel complains of your buttocks on top of it
 Complaint which finds your love intrusive
 The pull of the bridle on her heart makes me envy
 Her mouth toward you like one seeking a kiss
 The eye of a beauty among the chaste excites me
 On the day of parting to longing and thirst
 He can protect from killers other than her
 This eye, Badr ibn Ammar ibn Ismail

He dispels great care the same as she 10
 And he leaves a great kingdom abased
 Pertinacious when the debtor delays with his debt
 He makes a sword surety for what he intends
 Eloquent when speech makes him put down his veil
 He gives a wise heart by his discoursing
 His bounty prepares the time so it is generous
 Through him yet time has been miserly of him
 And as if lightning on the back of a cloud
 Were Indian steel unsheathed in his hand
 The place for its hilt flows with gifts 15
 If they are a stream there is no riverbed
 Its edges are thin for they as it were
 Display emaciation from their love of necks
 O he rolls a fierce lion in dirt with his whip
 For whom do you keep the polished sword?
 A misfortune befell the Jordan in it
 It piled a mound of skulls in a company
 A red one, when it reddened Buhaira drinking
 Its roar reached the Forat and the Nile
 Stained with the blood of horsemen, wearing 20
 In its lair the thicket as some of its mane
 Its eyes are not approached without appearing
 In darkness as fire of a party of travelers
 In the solitude of a monk except that it
 Does not know what is lawful or forbidden
 It treads the ground confident in its pride
 It's as if it were a doctor probing an illness
 It erects its forelock at the top of its skull
 Until it becomes for its head a crown
 You think that since it echoes itself it 25
 Attacks that in the fierceness of its rage
 For fear of it they shorten the step and it's as if
 An armored warrior rides his horse hobbled
 It throws its prey down and roars before it
 You keep coming on as it suspects an intruder
 For you are alike in nature as to boldness
 But you are different in lavishing nourishment
 A lion that sees his limbs in you, both pairs
 Slender at back and muscular in fore part
 In the saddle of a thirsty, jointed one, springy 30
 Her uniqueness rejects any comparison to it
 One who gets to the goal and if she does not
 Yield the bridle's place it is not touched
 The sides of her neck sweat when you spur her
 The knot of her bridle seems to be loose
 The lion continues to gather itself to its chest
 Until you think its width is its length
 It beats on the rocks with its chest as if it
 Wanted a way into the mountain floor
 It's as if its eye deceived it and it approached 35
 Not seeing the great calamity impending
 The pride of a noble one has a defect that leaves
 The greatest numbers as small in its eyes

Shame is a burning and there is no dread
 Of death for one who fears what is said
 It anticipates a meeting with a rushing jump
 If you don't collide, it'd shoot past a mile
 Its strength deserts it when you confront it
 It thinks to win by surrender and by falling
 Its death gripped it by legs and neck 40
 It's as if you held it in an iron collar
 Its cousins heard of it and its condition
 They escaped in flight being afraid of you
 Its flight is more bitter than what it fled from
 And like its death if it had not died fighting
 The ruin which took bravery as a companion
 Is a sermon to one who took flight as a friend
 If your knowledge of Allah were shared among
 Men, Allah would not have sent the messenger
 And if your words were among them he would not 45
 Have sent down Koran or Torah or Evangel
 And if that which you give them existed before
 You give it them, they would not know hope
 Indeed you are known and yet not really known
 You are unknown yet not ignored in obscurity
 Fate speaks with satisfaction in your authority
 And in what a fine horse accepts with a whinny
 Not every one who seeks the heights gets through
 To them, not every man is a stallion.

74 A letter came from Ibn Raiq to Badr adding the seashore to his command and he said. (231)

Do you enjoy Tyre or we enjoy it for your sake?
 Tyre is not much to you for you are one of his
 Not small are Jordan and the coasts which are
 Given by him except alongside your worth
 Countries envy each other until if they had souls
 The east and the west would travel to you
 And if the city were to lose its prince
 It would weep if it had eyes and mouth.

75 And he came to him and saw an official robe before him folded and it was his but he kept it folded and Abu Tayyib delayed because a sickness had come on him. (231)

I see a beautiful garment that is folded
 My sickness prevents me from seeing it on you
 Granted that you folded it and withdrew from it
 Have you put away what is beautiful in you?
 Indeed its external honors are continually
 In conflict with that which is near your body

The eyes look on you when you are in it
 As if the hearts of men were on you
 When I described your virtue in words
 It is as if I counted grains of sands.

76 He spoke praising him as he was going to the coast and
 then returning to Tiberias. (232)

Love is that which denies words to our tongue
 But sweetest sigh of lover is what he declares
 I wish the darling who fled with loss of sleep
 Without sin would come back as emaciation came
 We parted and if you describe us you won't know
 Our color among those that change color
 And our souls are kindled so that indeed
 I fear the gossips will burn up between us
 I am ransom for the departed one whom I followed 5
 With a single glance between double sighs
 I did not know the unlucky event the first time
 Then I recognized it and it came often
 I traveled over the world's deserts and my camel
 Was there and my time dawn and midnight
 So I stayed there where bounty made me stop
 And I gained my reward from Badr ibn Ammar
 Abu Husain's gifts are too small for baskets
 Even if the vessels are those of the times
 Courage! he does not need any mention of it 10
 Its fame forbids the cowards to be cowards
 His sword hanger hangs at his warlike shoulder
 He never retakes, how return and not turn?
 It is as if his thrusting on in front of him
 Were in fear lest he be struck from the rear
 The sharpness of his wit cancels the uncertain
 He judges hidden matters with certainty
 The strong are afraid of his unforeseen attack
 They are always in a shroud even in solitude
 He promotes his will and it is sure for him 15
 He thinks of what is afar and then it is near
 He finds the iron on the softness of his skin
 Like a garment lighter than silk and softer
 More bitter than the loss of the beloved for him
 Is the loss of a sword that has lost sheaths
 Fear does not settle within his breast even
 For a day nor good will that does no good
 What is future is deduced from his knowledge
 As if that which will be is written in it
 The understanding falls short of his attainment 20
 Like it does that which is in heaven and earth
 He who is not killed by him is one freed by him
 He who does not submit is one he destroys
 When you come in procession from the shore to us
 The desolation goes to it from amongst us

The road exhales since you do not pass a place
 Except there remains a perfume settled in it
 If the trees understood that which you bring them
 They'd stretch their branches greeting you
 The jinn follow the paintings on the tent out of 25
 Love of them, and they turn their eyes to you
 Our horses rejoice and we imagine they would
 Dance with us, if shame did not hinder them
 You approach smiling but the horse is frowning
 It trots with the double ring-mail and spear
 Its hoofs suspend the dust around them
 If you want a fast pace on it, it can do it
 The command is your command and hearts thrill
 In the battle between death and the reward
 I was amazed until I no longer wondered at swords 30
 I looked until I could not see the flashing
 As for me I see you as an army of generosity
 Amid an army, and a mine of eminence
 The heart understands what I did during absence
 And what I left for fear you would know
 Your departure was clear to me as a penalty for it
 Nothing that I suffered by it was easy
 Forgive me as I am your ransom and grant me now
 To be chosen for a gift of which I am part
 Prohibit the advice about me by those in error 40
 For a free man is tormented by sons of whores
 And when a fellow flings out words openly
 In assembly, take his word for what it means
 The tricks of fools return upon themselves
 The hostility of poets is an evil possession
 The society of gossips is cursed for it is
 Like a guest bringing regrets as guests
 The hatred of the jealous when I find you content
 Is a misfortune too light for me to weigh
 He who exists in your lordship as an unbeliever 45
 Apart from us is assured by your favor to us
 The lands are deprived of the rising sun at night
 Allah atones with you so they are not sad.

77 And Badr ordered that the people be kept apart from him. (238)

You have ordered the screen for seclusion
 Alas you have no power over the veil
 One whose forehead is light and whose gifts
 Can't be hid cannot hide himself from sight
 And if you veil yourself yet you are not hid
 If you go in yet you are outwardness itself.

78 And Badr poured out for him but he had no desire to

drink and said: (238)

You don't know anyone I drink with but you
 This is only because of your love for me
 And not for the love of wine, and so I
 Become hopeful and respectful of you.

79 And he spoke also. (239)

Drinking with the Emir blames those who blame me
 For drinking, and that is enough answer to spies
 The cloud of your hand pours rain on my lands
 I bring you thanks; your kindness is my bearer
 When do I rise to praise and you do not help?
 Words of you are highest power for the speaker.

80 And Badr repented of drinking but he saw him drinking
 and he said. (239)

O king whose drinking companions are
 Partners in his kingdom without his power
 Every day amongst us the blood of the grape
 Makes you repent from repenting to kill it.
 Truth has some of the nature of wine so tell us
 Is it from wine you repent or from leaving it?

81 And he spoke also about this. (239)

Badr is a youth who if he were his own client
 A day, his joy would be more than his wealth
 One's actions are perplexed at his actions
 He minimizes what he does by his demands.
 You see a moon! there are two clouds in the place
 Of his countenance on the left and the right
 He sheds blood by his bounty not his power
 Nobly for birds of prey are of his household
 If he destroys what he has yet there remains
 A memory. Time will end before its end.

82 He made a request of him and he granted it so he arose
 and spoke. (240)

I have just returned with a request granted
 I hate to be kept waiting in the assembly
 You are the one who prolongs my stay here
 Better for my soul than my life in it.

83 Badr invited him to the assembly and he said. (240)

O Badr, though talk is obscure, you are one
 For whom creation does not have an equal
 You have become great until if you were faith
 Gabriel would not be intrusted with it
 Some of creation are set apart from others
 When you are present then all above are low.

84 And he said also about him. (241)

The horses are your ransom and they are marked
 And Indian swords and they are unsheathed
 I have described you in verses that gallop
 But though they are many adjectives remain
 The actions of the men of old are a darkness
 But your acts by their acts are the new morn.

85 And he made ready to depart at night and said. (241)

The night passes but excellence in you does not
 Your face is sweeter to the eyes than clouds
 So that I am garlanded by you with favor
 Part of me showing by this to others part of me
 Peace from Him whose throne is above the heavens
 Marked by that O best of those who tread earth.

86 And he spoke again and he was playing chess and there
 was much rain and he said. (242)

Don't you see O king of things hoped for
 The wonders which I see in the cloud?
 The earth complains to it of its absence
 And sucks its drops of water as saliva
 One fancies that in chess is my desire
 But in you is my hope and in you my goal
 I will go and peace be upon you from me
 My absence is my night, morning my return.

87 The drinking got hold of Abu Tayyib and he intended
 to go but he had no power over his words so he said,
 though he did not know it. (242)

It got of me what I got of it
 By Allah what drunkenness can do

This was my dismissal to my quarters
Is it permitted O Emir?

88 In the morning he regained control of himself so he
said. (242)

I found the wine overwhelming
It stirred in the heart its passions
It spoils the eloquence of a man
And yet it adorns his character
The best of a young man is his reason
And he who has reason hates its loss
Indeed I died last night a death there
And he who tastes it does not relish death.

89 He spoke describing a dancer who was present in the
assembly in the capacity of a maid servant. (243) -

A girl whose hair is half her length
Being appointed she performs her task
She dances around and in her hand a nosegay
Her gesture is responsible for her dislike
For if she makes us drunk, that she is ignorant
Of what she does to us is her excuse.

90 She came around and stopped opposite Abu Tayyib and
he said. (243)

A girl who has no spirit in her body
In the heart of her lover is passion
In her hand is a power that shows itself
Perfume in every good of her goodness
I will drink the cup that she offers
But tears of my eye spread on the cheek.

91 She passed around and stopped opposite and she raised
her foot and he said. (243)

O possessed of eminence and mine of culture
Our lord and son of a lord of Arabs
You have knowledge of every wonder
And if we ask, aside from you no answer
Is this one who approaches you a dancer
Or does she raise her foot in weariness?

92 And he spoke also about her. (244)

May Allah lengthen the rule of the Emir
 Excellent! Mudhar puts on honor in him
 For drinkers a girl; roughness is beneath her
 Her father was neither jinn nor human
 She stood on one foot out of respect for him
 And she did not know what she did or did not.

93 She turned and fell and he spoke about her accident.
 (244)

She did not move her foot intentionally
 Nor did she complain of pain in her giddiness
 I never saw a person with her face before this
 Do as she did with such determination
 She did not complain of her injury
 It pleased her that she saw you smiling.

94 And Badr commanded that she be helped up and she was
 raised and he spoke. (244)

Possessed of braids that have no fault in them
 Except they do not play fair with the neck
 If she flees it is without any prejudice
 If she visits it is without lustfulness
 You commanded she be lifted so she parted from us
 She showed no pain at the misfortune of parting.

95 He spoke to Badr: What have you done by bringing in
 the maidservant Luba? And he said: I wanted to de-
 stroy any suspicion of your eloquence. And then Abu
 Tayyib spoke. (244)

You thought you would cancel suspicion of my art
 You are greatest of the people of this age
 For I am the gold well-known whose imprint
 Increases in minting a dinar to a dinar.

96 And Badr said: No, by Allah a hundred weight of di-
 nars! And Abu Tayyib spoke. (244)

In the hope of your bounty poverty is driven away
 Insofar as you are hostile, life ceases
 The glass boasts when you drink from it
 The wine chides the one who dislikes it

And you are safe from it while it makes us drunk
 Until it's as if drunkenness were in awe of you
 No one has any hopes for liberality
 Except from Allah and from you O Badr.

97 And he spoke praising Abu Hasan Ali ibn Ahmad al Murri
 al Khorasani. (245)

No honor for anyone unless he is not oppressed
 In what is attained or fought for unsleeping
 It is not constancy when a man has to nurse it
 It is not purpose when obscurity hinders one
 Suffering evil and the face of one's oppressor
 Are a food that make the body grow thin
 He is base who competes with meanness in his life
 Many a life makes death easier than this
 Every clemency that one brings without strength 5
 Is a pretext that the mean bring forward
 He who is base finds that scorn is easy to bear
 There is no pain in wounds for the dead
 My time hampers the arm so that I am
 Straightened, but the generous think well of me
 Standing beneath the foot of my soul's worth
 With mankind waiting beneath my feet
 Shall I take pleasure in quiet above the sparks
 With a goal I covet and my oppressor competing?
 Until the Hijaz and Nejd are choked with 10
 Lances and the two Iraqs and Syria
 As the air is choked with dust as he goes forth
 The lord of vastness Ali ibn Ahmad?
 The cultured, educated, the prince, the lean one
 The sagacious, the subtle, the noble hero
 He who has the doubts of his time as his prisoners
 Among those who envy his gifts are the clouds
 He heals from great wealth by reducing it
 With generosity, as if wealth were sickness
 Handsome, but in the eyes of his enemies uglier 15
 Than his guest which the pasture camel sees
 If anything could protect a lord from death
 Majesty and grandeur would protect you
 Flashings of bared ones whose religion is license
 But yet their dress is that of the pilgrims
 There is written on a page of glory: In the name...
 And then Qais and after Qais...Peace
 Truly those of Murra ibn Auf ibn Sa'ad
 Are live coals that ostriches don't relish
 Their night is their dawn from the fires 20
 Their dawn from the smoke is longest night
 Aspirations have informed you of those ranks
 That imagination falls short of reaching
 Souls which when they confront the battle
 Are consumed before the attack is finished

Hearts that have settled down to war
 As if their attacks were on the right path
 Leading on every rangy mare and stallion
 That saddling and bridling wear thin
 They stumble over the heads just as the 25
 Stutterer trips over the t's of his speech
 Your overwhelmings have lengthened misfortune
 Until the sword tells about you what I say
 The swords have defended you from men until
 The pen has defended you from the blades
 Experience has protected you from opinion until
 Inspiration has reversed experience
 A knight who buys a duel with you for honor
 Is not to be blamed for his sudden death
 He who receives a glance from you, when poverty 30
 Drives him to it, has a grace in poverty
 The best of our parts is our heads but
 The feet are better still in seeking you
 Indeed, by my life, I stayed short of you
 In the push of the crowd and press of gifts
 I was afraid that if I were at your right hand
 People would take me for a gift of yours
 It was guidance I did not visit you when near
 Visits are recognized when made from afar
 The delay of your bounty to me was best 35
 The fastest clouds that come are empty ones
 Speak, for how many pearls on the string
 Wish that they were words in your mouth
 Night and day fear you and if you were to forbid
 Them, the time would not pass for your sake
 Allah defends you so you don't stray from truth
 And so that no crime is directed to you
 Why are you not cautious as to consequences
 In things other than vile and what is taboo?
 How many a friends has no excuse for blame in him 40
 Yet you can blame him with respect to piety
 Freedom from blame has raised your worth
 And weighty business restrained your heart
 Indeed some poetry is only nonsensical talk
 Nothing at all, and some of it wisdom
 Excellence and generosity evoke some of it
 And some of it lung sickness draws forth.

98 And he spoke also and intended to depart. (251)

Don't disapprove of my parting from you hastily
 For I have no choice in this departure
 Often a man parts from his heart's blood
 On day of battle without words fearing shame
 I was tested by the envious I fought against
 So give bounty to some who helped me.

99 He spoke describing his journey to Bawadi and he satirized Ibn Karawwus al A'ur. (251)

My excuse is from the torments of affairs
 Which dwell in my breast instead of a tent
 And from the smiles of battle that are wrung
 From the swords and not from the lips
 I went toward them on my feet, girded up
 And on every camel with restless tether
 At times my saddle was in the tents of bedouin
 At times on the thorn tree of the camel
 I turned my breast to the sharp lance point 5
 And I set my face to the heat of noon
 I made journeys through the dark of night alone
 As if in that I had the light of the moon
 O speak of the causes that end in nothing
 Of effort like a pimple on a date pit
 And of a soul that does not respond to the vile
 And the eye that does not turn to any equal
 A hand that won't deprive one coming to me
 By dispute except for honor and my good
 But that little help when you passed me by 10
 With evil from you O evil of the times!
 Everything was hostile because of you when
 I fancied depression as my breast boiled
 If I were envied for something precious
 I'd be generous with it as a snare to fortune
 But not if I were envied for my life
 For there is no good in life without joy
 So O Ibn Karawwus O half dim-sighted one
 Even if you were honorable yet O half-seeing 15
 You hate us because we do not stammer, are
 Furious with us because we are not one-eyed
 If you were a man to be mocked we would mock
 But lukewarmness for it hinders the trip.

100 He spoke praising Muhammad ibn Ubaid Allah ibn Muhammad al Katib al Qadi al Khasib. (253)

The best of men are targets for these times
 One free of care makes them free of wit
 We are among a generation who are one and all
 Evil to a noble soul as sickness to a body
 Round about me in every place there are faces
 You'd be wrong if you asked them: Who are you?
 I never ask hospitality in a place without fear
 Nor pass among men without being hated
 I have not associated with one of their kings 5
 Not deserving the head struck off like an idol
 I excuse them while I reprimand them since
 I upbraid myself about them and acquiesce

The need of the stupid without a mind for culture
 Is the need of an ass without head for a rope
 I have been with the beggars of the desert
 Bare of clothes they were dressed in dirt
 Desert camel thieves with hungry bellies
 Lizard eggs are their food at no cost
 They inquire but I don't give them my story 10
 The arrow of suspicion does not miss them
 Many a trait in a companion I imitate for them
 So it seems we are like in ignorance
 Many a sentence midway I fear as good Arabic
 They guide me but I can't attain bad grammar
 Patience makes easy for me every calamity
 Will softens the edge of every rough ship
 What salvation and eminence for one seeking death
 What a drubbing with blame for the coward
 Fine clothes do not overawe one who is wronged 15
 Does a splendid shroud amaze a corpse?
 By Allah I hope for a thing that is denied me
 My fate requires its existence and puts me off
 I praised people and if we live I will compose
 Qasidas of mares and stallions against them
 Beneath the dust their rhymes are lean
 When they are recited they will not enter ears
 I do not make war defensively behind walls
 I do not make peace deceitfully with evil
 The tents of the army are in the plain where heat 20
 Of noon fuses them with poison of rebellion
 Noble things destroyed have cast their noble acts
 On Khasib according to right and the sunna
 They are in his protection and each time orphans
 Turn to him, he appears with glory and bounty
 A judge, when two matters tangle, wisdom
 Occurs to him to distinguish milk from water
 Freshness of youth, far from the gray of its night
 Or turning his eye to excess and sleep
 His drink is sparing nor does he seek drunkenness 25
 His eating is to preserve the body not fat
 A speaker of the truth even if it harms him
 Uniting the states of thought and expression
 He decides judgment so the ancients falter
 Showing justice to those unmindful of wisdom
 His acts are lineage, if one did not add to them:
 Khasib's grandfather, we know root by branch.
 Rain cloud, son of the rain cloud who was son
 Of the rain cloud, son of the rain cloud
 They are at the origin of the world and its end. 30
 His fathers were ropes of wisdom among cords
 It's as if they were born before they were born
 Their wit existed in days when they were not
 Always those who walk proudly over their enemies
 Often praised as more guarded than warriors
 Joy for those who are awaiting his approach
 He erases wrinkles from foreheads of people

As if wealth of Abdallah's son were ladled
 From his two hands in lands of Rome and Yemen
 We lose by you nothing of the rain except slime 35
 Nor yet of the sea except boats and winds
 Nor yet of the lion except his ugly look
 Nor of his likeness except what is not good
 Since you girded yourself in Antakya it is just
 It's as if those who feud were at peace
 Since you crossed their mountains they are warned
 To lie flat with no growth on their tops
 Your gifts have emptied the markets of craftsmen
 Your bounty does without work or skill
 Generosity such as one cannot trust to the times 40
 Piety that is not at home in the world
 This is respect which men have not attained
 It is control of speech not found among gifts
 Go and nod at fealty that reveres you among peaks
 Allah bless the course of spirit on Hadhani.

101 He spoke lamenting his grandmother on his mother's side. (260)

O I know the fates are not to be praised or blamed
 Their blows are expected and delays pitiless
 To something like the youth was, the man returns
 He ends as he began and sleeps as he awoke
 Allah for you! she was unfortunate in her lover
 A murder of love without stain clinging to her
 I long for the cup from which she drank
 I love her dusty grave and what it holds
 I wept for her in fear during her lifetime 5
 Both tasted loss of his friend beforehand
 And if lovers' parting has killed them all
 Gone is a town surviving the flight it suffered
 I knew the nights before they did this to us
 They overtook me but added none of their lore
 Her profit did not hinder the profit of others
 She fed and poured lest one hunger or thirst
 My letter came to her after despair and grief
 She died in joy of me and I died wanting her
 Joy is forbidden to my heart, for I indeed 10
 Count what died there as poison after her
 She wondered at my script and words as if she
 Saw in letters of the lines speckled ravens
 She kissed it until its ink was becoming
 The black on her eye sockets and her teeth
 The flow of her tears was thin, her eyelids dry
 And my love left her heart after it bled
 Nothing except death consoled her, but yet
 The worst illness is what drives off illness
 I sought joy for her but she went and it left me 15
 She was content I pleased her with a share

I wanted a cloud to water her grave after
 I sought the flow of battle and a sharp lance
 Before death I judged distance a great thing
 But that became smallest which was great
 Suppose I took revenge for you on the enemy
 How could I take revenge for you on a fever?
 The world hasn't hindered me with any narrowness
 But a blind eye cannot show you there
 O grief, shall I not fall prostrate to kiss 20
 Your head and bosom filled with discretion?
 And shall I not meet your sweet spirit which
 Has a body as it were of the strongest musk?
 Had you not been daughter of a most noble father
 Your large father would be mother to me as you
 If the envious rejoiced on the day of her death
 She bore me to rub their noses in the dirt
 He was an exile not finding any great but himself
 And no way to wisdom except in his Creator
 There was no path except that of the dusty heart 25
 No finding sustenance except in generosity
 They say to me in every land: Who are you?
 What do you want? What I want exceeds naming
 It's as if their brothers knew that I was
 Bringing to them an orphan from its home
 The union of water and fire in my hands is not
 So hard as that I unite success and reason
 However I will seek victory with the edge of that
 Riding with it, in spite of all, at tyranny
 One makes it on the day of battle a greeting 30
 Otherwise I am no warrior chief heroic
 When fear dulls my will for the distant goal
 The farthest possible is finding no will
 For I am of those people for whom our souls seem
 To be scornful of dwelling in flesh and bone
 Thus am I, O world, if you wish make an end of me
 But O my soul put me ahead of what it hates
 May no hour elapse that does not strengthen me
 May no blood be mine that approaches injustice.

102 Some people started to make much of what he said in
 the last part of this qasida and he spoke. (264)

They want to magnify my growl in a bit of scorn
 They should not be envious when a lion roars
 If they had any hearts they would understand
 Fear makes them forget that envy is beneath it.

103 He spoke praising the Qadi Abu Fadl Ahmad ibn Abdullah
 ibn al Hasan of Antakya. (265)

For you O campsite there are camps in the hearts
 You become waste but they are peopled by you
 They know this and you do not know it but yet
 Worthiest of you is a weeper who has reason
 I am the one whose eye is merchant in mortality
 So who is the avenger when killer is killed?
 The camps are empty of the fawn but with it
 Is a stray ghost from all the weanlings
 These who make attacks on my heart are timid 5
 I love them near to me though they are stingy
 They shoot at us though they are far away
 They surprise us though they are unmindful
 They resist us by their likeness to the wild cows
 For they are snares without any dust
 Jousting at breasts of men are the oryx young
 Bracelets and ankle rings are on the lances
 The name of the eyecovers is scabbard for them
 Since they are controllers of the sword's work
 How many watchings filled you with love, after 10
 The guard wondered at us and gossips persisted
 Short of an embrace, emaciated like vowel points
 In accusative as a pointer thing and crowds
 Be gracious and rejoice for matters have an end
 Always when they have had their beginnings
 You do not continue as an object of beauty for
 Youth's shade on you is a shade that ends
 In pleasure is a moment that passes as if
 It were a kiss that a departing lover gives
 Time runs away and there is no perfect pleasure 15
 Among those who grow gray nor complete joy
 Until we come to Abu Fadl ibn Abdullah
 Whose sight is reward and an awesome resting
 The roads that lead to him are rained upon
 By his gifts, a shower in every mountain pass
 Veiled by the tent roof of his reverence
 It curbs the bridle though the camel is fast
 In it there is sun and cloud and ocean
 And wind and the shape of the lions
 With him is fine gold and culture redeemed 20
 And some of the sources of life and death
 If he did not allow noise of visitors around him
 Sand grouse would go nightly to him to drink
 By quick wit he knows what you need before
 It is shown him and he responds before request
 Our eyes see him confronting them and they turn
 Away, but they return when he approaches
 His words are swords and they are dividers
 All of the blows have muscle beneath them
 His generosity puts to flight every other bounty 25
 Until it is as if generosity were one family
 They destroy stench and funeral camel so you see
 No other misery and mother stink bereaved
 Next distinguished of the learned, a tide that
 Does not end though all tides have shores

If children in every tribe were pure like him
 Women would bear without their midwives
 If embryos would appear as generously as he
 The bearer would know the male from female
 The noble Banu Hasan should increase humility! 30
 As unlikely as the torch is hid in darkness
 They veil gifts as the raven hides his mounting
 But it appears and should the rain cloud hide?
 Nature boasts of them but they do not boast
 Of that as indication of a noble ancestry
 Their elders are identical to restraint of soul
 Their youths to simplicity of izar on a chief
 O honored one, men make three things of you
 Wondering at greatness, envying or ignoring it
 You have risen and after that you do not worry 35
 If they know if a speaker praises or blames
 I praised you and if you wish you could say to me:
 You come short but restraint is a gift to me.
 Those who are eloquent do not dare to recite
 Verses here but I am the fiercest lion
 Not all the men of ignorance's time could attain
 My poems, nor did Babylon hear my enchantments
 And when my defects come to you as shortcoming
 Yet that is a witness for me that I am worthy
 Who secures the wits of small folk who claim 40
 That a grocer can appraise a sword for them?
 O by your truth! and that is the highest of oaths
 You are truth and other than you is false
 You are goodness when its goodness comes over you
 You are water, as washer you wash yourself
 The tongue never moved in the mouth nor fingers
 Turned the pen better than in your praise.

104 He spoke praising his brother Abu Sahl Sa'ad ibn
 Abdullah al Hasan al Antakya al Himsi. (271)

Parting has just taught our eyelids separation
 That bleeds, and associated the heart with grief
 I hoped the hour they went for a show of her wrist
 So the tribe perplexed would stay before going
 If she appeared to bewilder them shame would draw
 A curtain to guard their wits from her glance
 By the camel and its driver and myself! a moon
 Is panting in the curtains from her motion
 As for the dress, when one strips its beauty, 5
 Undressed one clothes her in beauty naked
 The musk embraces it with the embrace of a lover
 Until it is wrinkles on the belly wrinkles
 I was anxious about my tears because of my sight
 But now after you each dear thing is scorned
 The clouds bring their watery breasts for you
 For a beloved there are memories in flashes

When I approached terrors, a heart went with me
 When I wished solace from you it betrayed
 I appear and he who thought evil of me bows down 10
 I do not chide him with forgiveness but scorn
 And so I was among my people and in my country
 For what is precious is alien wherever it is
 I am envious of virtue, a liar about my mark casts
 Down a hero and meets me when his time comes
 I'm not thirsty for what does not bruise desire
 Nor do I reject that which passes as weakness
 Nor am I happy when others are praised for that
 Even if you brought me the century full
 No one ever attracts my camel toward him 15
 While I stay alive nor while our saddle rocks
 But if I had been able I would have ridden
 All mankind as a camel to Sa'id ibn Abdallah
 For the camel is wiser than the people that I see
 As blind to what he sees as benevolence
 It is generosity even if bounty is small for him
 Bravery even if he is not content as hero
 It is provision what his hand has gained for us
 And if he gives some of it he glorifies us
 Time is easy on the tips of his fingers 20
 Until they are supposed to be times for time
 He hurls battles and lances and catastrophes and
 The sword and the guest's open, glad handshake
 You imagine from the warmth of heart he is aflame
 From his kindness and cheer that he is drunk
 Singing girls trail the skirts of their gowns
 By his bounty, and the horses wear his halters
 He gives as a welcome to the clients beforehand
 As one does good to the thirsty with water
 Paradise is the reward of the Banu Hasan for they 25
 In their people are as Adnan's nobility
 Allah did not cry glory lost in their ancestors
 And indeed we now see it in them
 If written to or met or warred on they are found
 In script and word and battle to be knights
 As if their tongues in argument were made
 Like the lance heads on the spears in jousting
 As if they came to drink death out of thirst
 Or smell the Khatti lances as sweet herbs
 Beings, for one whose enmity I desire; the worst 30
 Enemy, and for one I'm friendly with brothers
 Natures which if the negroes had they'd change
 Into thin lips, curly hair, and white skins
 With souls whose brilliance makes them loved
 Perforce, even if far from you in hate
 Whose fathers are unclouded like their foreheads
 And their mothers, their minds and thoughts
 O hunter of armies whose flanks are fearful
 Whereas the lions hunt men one by one
 As for gifts every hour is time for his giving 35
 But donors dispense only now and then

You are one who gathers wealth for generous uses
 Then you accept clients for it as treasurers
 Responsible to yourself as guardian when alone
 You do nothing secretly that you do not openly
 I don't seek increase of what in you is noble
 I as one who slept would awaken being awake
 Indeed by such as you I shone with magnanimity
 With repulse of the hate of days by content
 You are most far reaching in fame and greatest
 In power, and highest of them building glory
 Allah has honored earth with you as its dweller
 He honored men since he made men like you.

40

105 And he spoke praising Abu Ayyub Ahmad ibn Imran. (277)

A herd whose beauties I am forbidden to possess
 Words are nearby but things are far off
 It looked down and when I shot my glances
 At white skin I saw their thinnest tears
 My groans drive on their camels from behind
 They fancy my sighs are cries of their driver
 It is as if they were trees in the desert but yet
 Trees from which I pick death as their fruit
 Would you were on no camel; if I were on it
 The heat of my tears would blot out brands
 I bore what you have borne from these wild cows
 And you bore what I have borne of their grief
 I am madly in love with what is beneath her veil
 But chaste as to what is beneath her dress
 Every beauty knows manhood and magnanimity
 And authority in me as hindrance to them
 These are three that forbid my pleasure
 In private life, not the fear of consequences
 Among things sought, death is what I have come to
 With firm heart as if I had not come to it
 Many a horse troop I have left with a horse troop
 As food for beasts who had been their food
 I approached them with one nobly marked as if
 On its forehead was the grace of Banu Imran
 Confident in horsemanship like the skins on
 Their backs when a thrust is at their breasts
 Their ancestors knew them for this as they knew
 Them, and they were riders of their mothers
 It's as if these gave birth standing beneath them
 And as if those were born in their saddles
 For noble things without their kind of generosity
 Are like hearts without their inmost cores
 Such are the conquering souls upon the heights
 But glory wins them in spite of their passions
 Their growth which watered mankind was watered
 By gifts of Abu Ayyub, best of their growth

5

10

15

There is no wonder in his giving gifts of flocks
 But rather at their safety in their times
 Wonderful is his hold upon the reins with fingers 20
 As their hold upon things is not usual
 As he passes he spurs among ranks of conscripts
 Printing mim by the hoofs of his horse
 He puts lance heads on whatever target he pleases
 Even up to the holes in the ears
 Full grown horses fall behind you O Ibn Ayyub
 Their legs are not of any benefit there
 The shudders in the bodies of knights due to you
 Run from the points through the spear shafts
 No one is favored by you except he knows about 25
 You, seeing you he does not say: Give.
 You deceive those who think the Koran a miracle
 Your chanting of surahs is among the miracles
 Generosity is clearly apparent in your words
 The breeding of a horse is clear in its voice
 Your absence from the place you have is impossible
 Moons cannot escape from their constellations
 We do not blame an illness you have; you are a
 Magnet to men and magnet to their ailments
 When they are a far journey from you you go ahead 30
 And meet before their relating their affairs
 The dwelling of the fever is the body so tell us
 What is its excuse in leaving its own good?
 You surprised it by nobility and long was its stay
 To give hope to the limbs and not to harm them
 You have lavished all that which your soul loved
 Until you lavished for this its very health
 It is the duty of stars to visit you from on high
 The lions pay a call on you from their lair
 And jinn from their hiding and the wild beasts 35
 From deserts and birds from their nests
 Humanity is noted by us and if it were a qasida
 You are the unique image in all its verses
 Among men there are examples whose life passes
 As their death and death as their life
 I feared marriage because of such offspring
 So I left the women with their daughters
 Today I go back to him who if he possessed
 The earth he would think it small as a gift
 A glance at him would be cheap for those who look 40
 And stubbing his toe is worth a blood price.

106 And he spoke praising Ali ibn Ahmad ibn Amir al
 Antakya. (284)

I joust with horses whose horsemen are destiny
 Alone, what do I say? for patience is with me
 And braver than myself, each day is my security
 It is not firm if it has no goal for itself

I have wrestled with woes until I left them
 Saying: Has death died or is fear afraid?
 And I have gone ahead in a rush as if I had
 Another soul or had a blood price upon it
 Let the soul have its way before its departure 5
 Neighbors whose camp is life must separate
 Don't think glory is wineskin and singing girl
 For glory is only a sword and virgin fury
 And cutting the throats of men and watching
 Your black dust and the streaming armies and
 Your leaving in the world an uproar such that
 The ten fingers of a man must stop his ears
 If worth hasn't put you above thanks to the vile
 For a gift, then merit is his who had the gift
 And he who wastes his time in collecting wealth 10
 For fear of want is one who collects penury
 Every mare is for me against the tyrant class
 Upon her a youth with breast tight in hate
 With the spear point against them he passes
 The cup of death where wine is not asked for
 How many mountains I crossed witnessing that I
 Was the mountain; seas proving I was the sea
 Deserts where the place of a camel was our place:
 Middle of the saddle on the back of a camel
 They trotted with us in the middle of it as if 15
 We were on a ball or earth journeyed with us
 Many a day we joined to night as if there were
 On the horizon red clothes of its lightning
 And many a night we joined to the day, as if
 On darkness' back were dark green clothes
 Many a shower such that we thought Amir under it
 Would rise, not dead, or his tomb was a cloud
 Or the son of his son who lives, Ali ibn Ahmad,
 Gave there if I hadn't passed empty handed
 And a cloud whose bounty is like his bounty 20
 A cloud that has honor over every cloud
 A youth, no heart holds the desires of his heart
 If a heart encloses them no breast covers it
 Goods are of no use if not for his bounty
 What are brown lances worth without hands?
 Well joined when al Salt and Amir met there
 As when Indian sword and conquest conjoin
 Then they brought him of the broad brow revered
 You saw few men about him but they were many
 Ransomed by fathers of the men as a noble chief 25
 He was the generous tide which has no ebbing
 I did not stop until love led me to him
 His fame went along with me in every convoy
 I thought the story strained before meeting him
 But when we met the fact made the story small
 We drove to you through the length of every desert
 On every fast camel; all she met was a killing
 When she swells from the sting it makes her happy
 As if the tick wrapped a gift in her skin

We came to you short of sun and moon in distance 30
 Short of you in your state are sun and moon
 As if you were cool water without which no life
 With that cool there's no ten day thirst
 Knowledge and clemency and wit called me to you
 Words composed and the gift that is prose
 Almost the lines of what I spoke as verses
 When written made ink white from their light
 As if the manings in these eloquent words
 Were the Thurya stars or your flower nature
 Their hatred has kept me from power's presence 35
 And what vultures ask by way of their skulls
 I look upon difficulty as finer to see and easier
 Than sight of a small man trying to be great
 My tongue and my eyes and heart and my ambition
 Love those things in you as named and all else
 Not I alone have spoken these verses entirely
 My poem has in you a poem existing in itself
 And what is in it has no brightness of beauty
 But cheerfulness as it faced toward you came
 And if you get to heaven I know for sure 40
 You have not got the degree proper to you
 But the days have stopped my reproach as if
 Their sons were sinful and you their excuse.

107* And he spoke praising Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Sayyar
 ibn Mukarrim al Tamimy. (290)

Various kinds of men are lovers of various types
 The most defensive are the best in love
 No peace for me except in the death of the enemy
 Are there any visits that can heal hearts?
 The birds stay with them in this story
 Echoing it with scream and croak
 They have already taken their blood upon them
 As dress of mourning but not to tear collars
 We join their thrusting and struggle until 5
 We mingle with their bones our spearheads
 It is as if our horses from their youth on
 Were given drinks of milk from their skulls
 They rush upon them without any fear
 Trampling with us the brain pans and breasts
 They tread with fetlocks stained with blood
 As for youth, battles fling him into battles
 The violence of pride's flea is not anxious
 Whether it strikes when it rages or is struck
 O my determination! this night is long so see 10
 If the dawn is afraid of you in making return
 As if the first light is a lover wanting to visit
 Fearing the darkness of clouds like a guard
 As if its stars were gold chains upon it
 And its feet hobbled with the earth's surface

As if the air had suffered what I suffered
 And its blackness became wan from fatigue
 As if its darkness captivated my wakefulness
 And did not disappear unless that disappeared
 I flutter my eyelids in it and it is as if I 15
 Were counting with them the sins of a century
 But there is no night so long as that day
 That is mixed with the stares of the envious
 And there is no death so hateful as the life
 Where I see them sharing with me in it
 I knew the misfortunes of a young man until
 If one pedigreed them I'd be the geneologist
 And when the camel finds things scarce we ride
 The beast calamity to Ibn Abu Sulaiman
 A beast that does not demean the one on her 20
 Nor does one desire a convoy with her
 It grazes on the earth's growths within us
 Nor have I failed it except by barrenness
 To the one with a character that my heart adores
 If it weren't for that I'd sing a love song
 Every soul puts me in agony for love of that
 Though one can't compare him to a darling fawn
 He is the wonder of the times but it is no wonder
 He comes of a family who get on with wonders
 An elder in his youth but not an elder 25
 As they call those who reach gray hair
 He grows hard and the lions fear his strength
 He softens and we fear that he will melt
 More violent than the strong wind in destruction
 And swifter in giving than its blast
 They said: He has hit what we are looking at.
 So I said: You only saw a target close by.
 But how could he miss the target with his arrow
 If he does not miss hid things he thinks of?
 When his quiver is emptied it is clear to us 30
 Its arrowheads make wounds for its arrowheads
 He hits with one of them the notch of another
 If it does not break it splits the shaft
 Every straight one cannot transgress command
 Of his, unless we think that it has a mind
 The drawing of a bowstring makes you see between
 The bow and its striking the target a flame
 Are you not a son of those who thrive and rule
 And do not beget affairs without success?
 They get what they want by resolution easily 35
 Their ants hunt the wild beasts by creeping
 There are no breezes in the gardens but yet
 Their graves clothe their dust with perfume
 O you in whom the breath of glory returns
 And whose times return from trouble renewed
 Your manager came to me paying compliments to me
 He recited to me some strange verses
 Allah rewarded you with a diseased one
 You sent to the Messiah as a physician

And I have not refused the gifts from you
 But you have added to them this cultured man
 May your house never be without the dawns
 O sun may you never approach the west
 May there be safety for you from great misfortune
 As I have immunity through you from blame.

107 And he spoke praising him again. (296)

The least of my acts, but not the most, are glory
 And diligence, whether I attain or not, is joy
 I will seek my right with my spear and veterans
 Who seem beardless from long wearing the veil
 Heavy when they attack, light when called
 Many when they are violent, few when counted
 Jousting as if thrusts were not thrusts for them
 Blows as if fire were cold compared to them
 So I want there around me on every swift horse
 Men in whose mouth death seems honey
 I denounce the little people of these times
 Their wisemen fools and their resolve weakness
 Their nobles are dogs and their vision is blind
 Watchers as cats asleep, their braves monkeys
 An evil of the world is that a free man sees
 His enemy as need because of his friendship
 O harshness of the world why are you neglectful
 Of the free man who has no adversary?
 He goes and finds hateful things at his arrival
 The days and the harsh times torment him
 In my heart, though I do not tell it, is weariness
 And I dislike its women though they are friends
 My two friends among men are grief and tears
 In loss of one I loved there's no lack of them
 My tears flood from the eyelids as if my sheaths
 Were rivers for the eyes of every weeper
 As for me a sip of water satisfies me altogether
 I restrain myself as ostrich restrains itself
 I go as goes the spear point to the target
 I am hungry as the curly tailed wolf is hungry
 My soul is too large to reward backbiting
 Every slander is power to one who is powerless
 I pity people who are weak and foolish
 I excuse hate for me since they are opponents
 He forbids me from anyone except Ibn Muhammad
 Whose gifts for me make a place all too small
 They come without being promised but before them
 His nature without a promise promises them
 The sword the Indian made went as my friend
 To the sword which Allah, not the Indian, made
 When he saw me approaching he moved himself
 Toward me; a sword whose every side is an edge

No one before me saw a sea walk toward him
 Nor lions arising to embrace him as a man
 As if the strong bow were to submit to him
 In love, or refuse for other fingers than his
 Almost he hits the thing before he shoots it
 And makes possible a return for his arrow shot
 He hits a thing in the center though narrower 25
 Than a black hair on the darkest night
 By my soul he does not make light of deceit
 Even if the means and ends multiply in him
 Who is far from him is poor, who is near wealthy
 His honor is freedom, his wealth service
 He does a good action of his own accord
 And denies it to all whom praise condemns
 He scorns the envious in his thoughts of them
 As if they were never a part of creation
 His enemies are sure that he has no baseness 30
 But yet his hate is fitted to the one who sins
 And if Sayyar ibn Mukarrim has come to his end
 Yet you are rosewater when the rose has gone
 He went and his sons, you have their virtues
 A thousand when collected is one alone
 They have handsome faces and generous hands
 And much wisdom and sharp tongues
 And green garments and obedient subjects
 And spears on target and short haired horses
 While you live they are not dead nor their fathers 35
 Tamim ibn Murra and Ibn Tabikha Uddu
 Some of the things that appear, those I note
 But some that are hid from me are what appear
 Today there are those who blame me for loving him
 It is right best beings be loved by the best
 So he is and they stray from Ali and his ways--
 People of blame until the generous king dies
 There is no retreat from eminence in your bounty
 Nor musk and dew in the dusty tombs.

108 And he said goodbye to two of his friends and spoke
 impromptu. (303)

But as to parting it is what I am acquainted with
 My twin if departure were something born
 Indeed we knew that we would have to submit to it
 When we knew that we were not immortal
 When the fine horses of Abu Bahyi carry us
 From you the best I have ridden does wrong
 One distinguishes with blame the parting but I
 Am one who sees in these times no praise.

109 He spoke praising Abu Bakr Ali ibn Sahl al Rudbari

the Katib. (304)

Like my outside is the sheen of my sharp sword
 A joy to the eye, a tool when warriors clash
 You think the water a writing in fire's flame
 The finest script on protective amulets
 Each time you glance at its color, a wave
 Forbids the sight as if it were shaken by you
 Delicate bits of rays that are beautiful
 Repeating themselves in the straight flow
 It comes to water so that the edges drink 5
 It is compelled to go to the cobbler
 For the blood does not stick to its edges
 Nor do affronts to the soul worn thin
 O you who keep the darkness from me, my pleasure
 On a day of drinking, my refuge in a desert
 My Yemeni, who if I were able would have
 My eye as its scabbard because of its rarity
 My lightning, when you flash you are my action 10
 My cadence, when you clash you are my rhyme
 I do not wear you thus as ornament, but rather
 To strike through necks and midriffs
 And with you to cut through the iron upon them
 Each of us in his way is victorious this day
 Unsheathing it is spurring after midnight in Nejd
 So people of Hijaz clap hands for a shower
 I longed for something like it and it was as if
 I sought for Ibn Sahl who was its equal
 Not every prince comes from the Rudbari 15
 Not every thing that flies is a falcon
 He is a Persian who has a crown of glory
 He was one of the jewels in Parwiz's time
 His soul is better than every noble root
 Even if I traced a father for him to the sun
 The beauty of high things occupies his heart
 Apart from beauty of face and buttocks
 It is as if the jewel, the pearl and ruby
 Were his words and veins of gold too
 His enemies gnaw enviously at coals and iron 20
 As if they were chewing on the sugar of Ahwaz
 Eloquence attains for him the difficult with ease
 And he achieves fullness with conciseness
 The bearer of war and vengeance for the people
 And the weight of the debtors and the fainting
 Why does he not complain and why do they complain?
 For his, not the complainers, is the trouble
 O you whose courts are broad yet there is no
 Lodging for a night for kings who pass by
 For me with the points of your spears at dawn 25
 Are like ends of locust legs about to jump
 The Rudaini lances swerve away from me until
 They make loops of letters in the quivering
 By your noble fathers! there is sympathy,
 Consolation and strength for the departed

They left the earth after they had subdued it
 And it ran under them without a spur
 Armies submitted to them and they were respected
 The words of men to them were only a cough
 Many a fine camel after fine camel came to you 30
 In numbers like the grains of sand
 The trip through the waste land arranges them so
 They are like paintings on a garment
 One sees in the flesh of great wealth your acts
 That destroy the strong camels as treasure
 Each time thought grows rich with a promise
 From you, your hands reward with fulfilment
 A royal singer of the verses before him
 Approving a garment in the hands of a seller
 Ours is the speech but he knows the meaning best 35
 He is better guided toward eloquent words
 There are some men permitted around him
 Poets who seem to be buzzing flies
 He thinks that he is wise in this respect
 But he in blindness has thrown away his cane
 Each verse is equal to one who speaks of you
 The mind of the praised is like the praiser's.

110 He spoke satirizing some people. (309)

Has ignorance killed you before your death
 Or the ants run off with you light as straws?
 Little children of Ubayy Tayyib, the dog, why
 Is it you fancy a name when you have no sense?
 Even if my catapult hit you and your foundations
 Were strong you'd break, so what is no basis?
 And if you were of those who manage their affairs
 You'd not be offspring of one who has no son.

111 He spoke praising Husain ibn Ali al Hamadani. (310)

Passion for one whom distance holds possesses me
 O would I had the distance and he the passion
 I rejoice that love renews a memory of the past
 Even if hardest stone could not survive it
 Waking that comes to eyes from you is with us as
 Sleep, bitter herbs your camels graze as roses
 Imagine until it is as if you had not gone
 As if despair of your embrace were a promise
 And until almost you brush away my tears 5
 And drops of your scent cling to my garments
 When a beauty betrays she is loyal to her pledge
 Part of her vow is a vow not lasting for her
 And if she loves she is violent in passion
 If she is angry, away, her rage has no limit

And if she hates no pleasure remains in her heart
 If she is happy no hate stays in her breast
 This is the nature of woman and oftentimes
 Her direction strays and her guidance is hid
 But still loving veils the heart in youth 10
 Increasing bitter fate and intensifying it
 May Ibn Ali pour from every cloud that pours
 Sufficient for her as sufficient for you
 To water as it waters the lands that you dwell in
 To make grow there above you honor and glory
 With one that eyes are raised to on parting day
 And the cloak is torn from the press of men
 Fingers cast off their weapons and do not know it
 Due to much waving at him when he appears
 Striker at head of the head striker in battle 15
 Light when saddle pad is heavy on horse
 Foresighted at seizing praise in every place
 Even if the lion hid it between his teeth
 By hope in him the youth is rich before his gifts
 And by fear cuts to shreds before the sword
 My sword! you are sword, not one you unsheathe
 For blows and a sword's metal is your sheath
 By my spear! you are the lance, not one you wet
 With blood; without a flint no spark spurts
 They are ones to share thanks between them and me 20
 For they are benefited insofar as they benefit
 My thanks to them is double, thanks for gifts
 And thanks for thanks which they give later
 Their horses are standing at the doors of tents
 And their images run in hearts that fear them
 Spendthrift of themselves for their deputies
 Their wealth at home envoy for those not sent
 It's as if the gifts of Husain were armies
 And among them are slaves and perfect horses
 I see a moon, son of the sun, wearing eminence 25
 Go slowly until the cheeks wear their beard
 He expands the size of the armor at its joints
 Over a body whose cut is cut of spear shaft
 He gave good news of virgin generosity beardless
 His fathers were thus and they were beardless
 I praised his father before him and he healed
 My hand of emptiness as sick eyes are healed
 He gave me eight fast coursers before which was
 Fear of my going as they entice to distance
 But desire to return was bounty of his right hand 30
 Double, double though generosity was unique
 I did not cease to cast down those envious of that
 In their hands was rage and in my hands gifts
 I had the Coptic robe of a prince and his wealth
 And they had disbelief which I had overcome
 They aim at the goal of speech, nevertheless
 A monkey only apes a man in what is senseless
 For they are in a company the crow could not see
 They make noise the mole cannot hear

Men think to ransom every strange word of mine 35
 So they pay by not blaming if it is not praise
 I have found Ali and his son the best of people
 Best people even if free and slave are equal
 My poem becomes theirs in its setting
 On a neck of beauty with necklace adorned.

112 He spoke praising Abu Muhammad al Hasan bin Abdullah
 ibn Tughj. (315)

I'm my own accuser, if I were in a mood for blame
 I'd know what's wrong with me in these traces
 But I am one of those perplexed, enslaved
 As a river, and my heart unveiled as a secret
 We stopped as if all the passion of our hearts
 Had made stubborn the legs of our camels
 We trod with the soles of the beasts its dust
 I sought for healing from the kiss of the hoof
 The camps which are their homes are defended 5
 By long lances, not guarded by amulets
 Adorable, the brocade imprints its likeness
 When they sway there is grace in their bodies
 Their smiles show pearls like those in necklaces
 As if their breasts were adorned with teeth
 Common to me and the world? my goals are its stars
 And my course to them is through snakes' jaws
 It is reason that you employ ignorance against it
 When the ways of evil are broad with reason
 And if you desire water half of which is blood 10
 Drink where he won't drink who won't strive
 He who knows the days with my knowledge of them
 Among men will water his lance without pity
 For there is no pity when they overcome him
 Nor any evil for them in an unjust death
 If I attack I don't leave counterblows to the bold
 If I speak I do not leave a word to the wise
 Otherwise may the rhymes betray men, and weakness
 Of determination hinder me from Ibn Abdullah
 From one who gains his legacy to lavish as legacy 15
 And puts aside greed as with a sacred taboo
 His enemies desire the place of his clients
 And the weighty clouds envy his two hands
 He does not meet a battle except with a heart
 Magnified with munitions for greatness
 Possessed of uproar there are no birds in front
 To snatch, nor beasts stirred up by surrender
 The sun passes over it but she is blinded
 She rises between feathers of great vultures
 When rays strike between the wings of the birds 20
 They whirl above the helmets like dirhams
 Thunder hides from you and lightning is above it
 From a flashing on its borders and an uproar

I see there between the Forat and the waste land
 The attack that leads horses over skulls
 The jousting of a chief when he restrains them
 They know Rudaini lances before their toys
 They protect him from the enemy on every side
 Swords of the Banu Tughj ibn Juff the prince
 They do well in renewed attacks in thick of battle 25
 Better than that their returns to bounty
 They do best in the forgiveness of every sin
 And are angry at the debts of every debtor
 They are modest, except in their onslaughts they
 Are less modest than the edges of the sword
 But for my scorn of lions I would compare you
 And after all they are counted among beasts
 Sleep has left me because of my travels to him
 Whose good deeds travel to every sleeper
 By freeing prisoners and destroying the enemy 30
 Rescuing those who wail and are held in dust
 Nobly I shook off men when I reached him
 As if they were dry leaves among fresh fruit
 Almost my happiness did not exceed my regret
 For absence from him in my life that is past
 I left the evil of the earth, people and dirt
 Alids there, whose ancestor was not Hashim
 Allah beset envy of the Emir with his mercy
 And set him among them in place of a turban
 For in swift death there would be peace for them 35
 In life they had only a throat slashing
 As if you didn't subdue one whose bounty was plain
 To you, and did not kill those who withstood.

113 Abu Muhammad asked him to drink wine and he refused
 so he said: By my soul! Take it. (320)

Your words were: Pour me the wine. By my soul!
 But love for me doesn't mix with insincerity
 If you swore by the right hand and if you insisted
 On my death with it I'd strike off my own head.

114 Then he took the cup and said. (320)

You greet with an oath and I ransom one who swears
 Mankind exists for his glorious greatness
 So I seek the pleasure of the Emir by drinking it
 And I take it and abandon the taboo.

115 Someone sang a song and he said speaking to Abu
 Muhammad. (320)

What is it that he who sings is saying
 O best of those who are under this heaven?
 You turn my heart with the glance of an eye
 To you, away from the beauty of this song.

116 And he offered him a sword and he showed it to some
 who were present. (320)

I see the astonishing thin edges of the smiths
 And they are what suit every proud youth
 If you grant it to me with you as previous owner
 I will test it for you with this youth.

117 And he intended to depart and he said. (320)

Night strives strong with me competing for you
 My departure is the sharpest weapon for it
 Because each time I depart, my sight
 Finds distance between my eyelids and dawn.

118 He traveled at night and he did not know where he was
 when he entered a garden and spoke. (321)

Many a visit which was not promised
 Is like a sleep to eyelids awake
 The horses ambled with us here
 With the Prince Abu Muhammad
 Until we entered this garden
 Would that its dwellers were immortal
 Both green and red is the earth
 As if it were on the cheek of youth
 I wanted some comparison for it
 But I found nothing that existed
 And then you had recourse to reality
 Solitude for the one who is unique.

5

119 And he spoke about him also. (321)

Many a moment is an age for me with the only one
 He outweighs his people with me and much more
 I drink from the beautiful light of his brow
 And blossoms you see in water murmuring there
 People make him their model and I do not omit it
 My times in his court become immortal.

120 He spoke describing courtiers who were approaching
like a herd of buffaloes and were far gone in drunk-
enness. (322)

Two courtiers with difference between them
Are opposed, though of fine culture
When you go up to one the other turns in fear
If you go to the other that one turns
Why does he fear you who knows not he withdraws?
But I make them see wonder in their actions.

121 And the night approached and they were in the garden
and he said. (322)

The day ends but the light from you reminds us
It does not end if night's wing is clipped
And if a desire for a garden were to hold us
Then peace, for every place with you is garden.

122 There was repeated drinking when the incense was
thick and the scent of ambergris arose in the as-
sembly and he spoke. (322)

O fume of sandalwood and face of the prince
Beauty of a singer and purity of wine
Cure my drunkenness by my drinking of them
For I am drunk with the drink of happiness.

123 When he left the garden he looked at the clouds and
said. (323)

A cloud appeared before me and we were returning
So I said: Be off! There is a cloud with me.
Look at the tent of the king who is our hope
And hold off until he decides to pour out.

124 And Tahir the Alid referred to his steadfastness and
Abu Muhammad was present so he said. (323)

Is it goodness which I have done without
That is supplied by nearness to the Prince?
Our exalted Lord has set me up with him
Just as He will forgive those sins of yours.

125 And Abu Muhammad started to shake incense from his
sleeve and sprinkle it over him and he spoke. (323)

O most generous of men in action
Most eloquent of men in speech
If you spoke in this scattered incense
Then you spoke this way in bounty.

126 Abu Muhammad told of their journey at night on a
desert raid and that the rain overtook them and he
spoke. (323)

Courage does not ask in vain of you
So whose story and information?
We knew before that you were one whom
Neither night nor rain could forbid his wish.

127 And he spoke also and he was with Tahir the Alid.
(323)

You have achieved what you desired of virtue
And true is that nobility of yours
If you do not travel to your home now
I fear that it will journey to you.

128 And he wanted to arise but he was made to sit and
he spoke. (323)

O you in whom I see clemency as baseness
And the freedom of a king as slavery
The drinking leans heavy on me
And you are guided to generosity
If you will favor me with my dismissal
I will count it a kindness on your part.

129 Abu Muhammad remembered that his father had once
become lightheaded and that a Jew had recognized
him and he spoke. (323)

Don't blame the Jew because
He saw the sun and did not deny it
Because blame on its own account is
Darkness after which one cannot see.

- 130 He was asked improptu for some verses and he responded and they were amazed at his memory and he said.
(324)

But I hold the object of praise in my eye
Not in memory when I look at the Emir
Many qualities when I look at them
Compose themselves into rare embroidery.

- 131 He spoke and a companion had related to him, that is, Abu Muhammad ibn Ubaid Allah, concerning warriors that frightened him, their work and their appearance.
(324)

O bringer to life of every difficult generous act
And rider of every swift strong horse
And thruster in every broad bloody wound
And opponent of every slanderer of sincerity
May Allah bless me before the day of death with
Blood of an enemy from the depth of a wound.

- 132 And he sent out a falcon for quail and he took one and he said. (324)

Have you found the meaning of everything
And outdistanced the world for every goal?
What have you left for him who has not ruled?
What have you left for him who has ruled?
It is as if the quail, when it saw you
Pursuing it, wanted to be pursued.

- 133 Abu Muhammad crossed some mountains and the slaves tracked a deer and the dogs brought it to bay and Abu Tayyib spoke. (324)

There is many a peak on this long mountain
Remote, like a curve of a sick camel's neck
One goes through narrow ways and rocks
As if the middle of the road is knotted rope
We visited it for affairs it was not used to
For hunting and pleasure and play
With every shedder of the black blood
Trained with the leash and the collar
With all the sharpened curved teeth
Like files on two edges of a mouth
A seeker of revenge even if he doesn't hate
He kills what he kills without quarter

He pursues a gazelle and does not lose it
 It starts from greenery wet with dew
 Like growth of beard on hairless cheek
 Nor can it wish to follow anything but death
 Nor can it fall except within the claws 10
 It does not leave any plunder to the poet
 Describing it to the glorious prince
 The king Abu Muhammad, chief of the tribe
 Hunter of warriors with Indian sword
 With bright graces which appear and recur
 If I want their number I can't count them
 If I think of his bounty I can't exhaust it.

134 He wanted to say something fine about the eye of a falcon in the assembly and he said. (326)

O how shall I prettify them as eyes
 If only the beauty were not surprising
 Yellow as the spicy saffron
 A small black center grape of nightshade
 When the falcon looks to his side
 It dresses his shoulder with a ray of light.

135 He chided him for leaving off praising him and he said. (326)

Abandoning your praise is like satire on myself
 If the praise for you is short it is much
 Not that I have left off cuttings of verse
 In affairs such as mine there are excuses
 Your character is your praise, not my words
 And bounty is envied by my phrases
 Allah bless him who makes gifts by your hands
 But I pour out drink for you O prince.

136 He spoke in farewell to him. (327)

This farewell is not the farewell of a sad lover
 This parting is parting of soul from body
 As for the cloud, the wind drives it high
 May it not come near Ramla, the gem of cities
 O parting from the prince whose mansion is broad
 If you part us today may you not do so again.

137 He spoke praising Abu'l Qasim ibn Tahir the Alid. (327)

Bring back my morning for it is with the virgins
 Restore my sleep for it is a vision of my love
 For my day is a night that is intensely dark
 To eyes that, due to your loss, are weak
 To the distance between eyelids it is as if
 You hooked each eyelash end to the eye hollow
 I think that if I had wanted a parting with you
 I'd be dead, for time is the foulest friend
 O would that what is between me and my lovers 5
 In distance were between me and misfortune
 You thought the thread was my body so you kept it
 From you by a pearl lest it touch a breastbone
 If I were thrown in the cut of a pen's tip
 By illness I'd not alter a stroke of a writer
 She scares me with less than she asks
 She doesn't know shame as the worst of ends
 No avoiding a day bright as a horse with white legs
 After which the wailing is heard for long
 Easy for one such as I when he aims at a goal 10
 The clash of spears before it and of swords
 Much life for a man is like a little of it
 It ends and life's scrap is as what is gone
 Be off women for I am not one who when on guard
 Against snake bite sleeps on top of scorpions
 Threats of claimants reached me and that they
 Have brought for me Sudanese to Kafr Aqib
 If they spoke true of their kin I'd be warned
 But are their words about me alone not lies?
 By my life! the goal of every surprise is me 15
 As if I were amazement in the eyes of wonder
 In what land have I not trailed my flowing locks
 And what place have my camels not trampled?
 As if my ready camel was the hand of Tahir
 And my saddle was fixed on the back of gifts
 No creature lives who has not come to his court
 They are drink to him in coming to the pool
 A youth whose soul and ancestors teach him
 Beating the enemy and scattering huge gifts
 Indeed he draws courtiers from every homestead 20
 And sends back to his homeland every exile
 So are the Fatimids: the bounty of their fingers
 Is harder to erase than lines in finger joints
 Men who when they meet the enemy it seems that
 Weapons they confront are only dust of horses
 They toss their forelocks as from bows and come
 With bloody necks but with flanks unharmed
 They are the ones sweeter than life renewed
 More often remembered than the times of youth
 You have aided Ali, O son of him, with scimitars 25
 Of action, no bluntness for them in striking
 Brightest of the signs of the Tihami is that he
 Was your father and the richest of your merits
 When a soul of lineage is not like its stock
 What use then is that precious thing pedigree?

Comparisons of dissimilar people never approach
 Comparison of similar people never is distant
 If an Alawi should not happen to be like Tahir
 He is nothing but argument for the Nasibis
 They say there is influence of the stars on men 30
 What then of his influence on the stars?
 He rises on shoulders of the world to every goal
 It has the gait of one obedient to its rider
 It is right that he outdistances men while he sits
 And reaches unseeking what they do not reach
 He makes shoes of the noses of kings and they are
 Ones who on his feet find their highest degree
 A gift of the times, this union between him and me,
 A separation by him between me and misfortune
 Son of the Messenger of Allah, son of his executor 35
 A comparison with them I compared with fact
 He knows what is exposed in you to the attacker
 Is no worse than that exposed to backbiters
 But O wealth which has already been destroyed
 Take courage, for it is his way with armies
 Perhaps at some time you distracted his heart
 From generosity or increased the army at war
 I have brought him with my tongue a garden that
 My wit has watered as cloud water on meadows
 So may you be greeted by best son of best father 40
 Of the noblest house of Lu'ayy ibn Ghalib.

138 And Abu Tayyib spoke describing his horse thinking
 about the shortage of fodder for him. (334)

Nothing in fields that is green nor on trees
 Their herbage complains of much harshness
 The snow has stayed there like a comrade
 Freezing on the teeth the film of saliva
 Then it left not to return after its parting
 With captains in its thaw and followers
 It's as if Tochur was seeking a fugitive
 He eats the grass that is short and close
 Like your peelings of ink from the paper 5
 I seek it like a falcon for him
 Right leg different in color, long of crest
 Thick muscle around the buttocks
 With a broad breast and a noble character
 Having wide nostrils and lean flanks
 With white legs, large bodied and strong
 Ample his blaze like the rising sun
 As if it from its color were in lightning
 Hovering over dust and desert rock
 Cool of morn and even and hottest noon 10
 For the horseman riding it steadily
 Fear of a coward in the heart of a lover
 As if he were on the side of a high mountain

He is ahead of the speaker's sound in an ear
 If he outdistances the sun in eastern lands
 He comes to the west with the gait of a winner
 He leaves on the stones of the sandy hill 15
 The imprint of gems taken from a belt
 As he trots and if he runs it is a trench
 If they come to sip from a faithful cloud
 It is enough for a five day camel
 When the bridle comes to him on the night road
 He opens his mouth as the croaking raven
 As if the hide on the bare face bones
 Stretched from the curve of a crossbow
 He in his first hair outstrips a full-grown horse 20
 His legs faster than those of an ostrich
 His hoofs strike louder than the thunderclap
 His ears are more sensitive than a rabbit's
 He is more alert to danger than the raven
 He distinguishes between a jest and reality
 He it is who warns the rider of every thief
 He seems to you stupid but is cleverness itself
 He grooms himself at will like a falcon preening
 Derived from a fine mother and fine father
 Among the noblest of stallions and of mares 25
 His neck has grown like a palm tree
 His throat can be held by a strangler's hand
 He counts in the thrusting for a battalion
 And a blow in the face or point of separation
 And running in the shadow of fluttering flags
 He bears me and the blade with the double edge
 It drips on the armor down to the shirt
 I do not see the world with the eye of a lover
 And I do not bother with a small success
 You strike down every envious hypocrite 30
 You are ours and all of us are the Creator's.

139 And he spoke when Antakya was besieged and the colt
 and al Hîjr were killed so he spoke. (338)

When you strive madly for some high goal
 Be not content with what is short of stars
 For the taste of death in unimportant things
 Is like the taste of death in great things
 You will weep for grief of my mare and my colt
 Swords whose tears are the moisture of bodies
 They approached the fire and then grew in it
 As the virgins grow in tranquillity
 They departed perfect from the sword polishers 5
 And their hands had many a wound
 The coward thinks that weakness is reasonable
 But this is a trick of a sordid nature
 Every brave act for a man is worthwhile
 There is nothing like bravery for a wise man

How many who complain of a true saying
 But the lack is in the sick mind!
 For the ears seize on that which
 Is according to nature and knowledge.

140 He spoke mocking Ishaq ibn Ibrahim ibn Kaigalag. (339)

Heart's love has joy that one cannot understand
 Suddenly I looked for I thought I was safe
 O sister of knights who are earnest in battle
 Where brother is softer, more pitiful than you
 He looks long at you with modesty for he knows
 Magians perished by what they thought good
 Elegant whiteness in my sideburns delights you
 If it were natural, black would be a delight
 If it were possible for me I would unveil youth 5
 For gray hairs before their time are a veil
 Indeed I have seen misfortune but I have not seen
 Snowy hair die nor yet black hair protected
 Desire weakens the lusty with emaciation
 Whitens the forelock of youth and he ages
 Rational man's bliss is unhappy due to his reason
 And foolish man rejoices in misery
 Men have cast off restraint, and the one set free
 Forgets a friend and regrets a pardon
 Let not the tears of an enemy deceive you 10
 Pity your youth from an enemy you pity
 One whose noble nature is high yields not to evil
 Until the blood drips from its sides
 The little bit of vileness harms by its nature
 One who is not small, as it is small and base
 Wrong is of the nature of souls and if you find
 One pure, it is by weakness he does no wrong
 Ibn Kaigalag forbids the road as does his wife
 The biggest road is that between her legs
 Set an armed guard over a vulva that seems calm 15
 For death in her womb is a huge sea
 Be gentle to yourself for your nature is waning
 Conceal your father for your root is evil
 Your wealth is questionable, your levity farting
 Your pleasure a penis your master a dirham
 Beware of the hostility of men, for you
 Are hard on a slave's cock and you dare
 Slander from those who have no respect is a trial
 In error, and plea from ones who know nothing
 He walks on all fours toward the rear 20
 Among unbelievers bridled from behind
 His eyelids are never quiet as if they were
 Watering, or unripe fruit was crushed in them
 And when gestures of his tell a story it's as if
 A monkey chattered or an old woman slapped

The back of his head hates the motion of a hand
 Until he almost wears turbans because of fists
 He seems smaller when you see him talk
 More than ever false when swearing an oath
 Baseness shows itself by baseness in loving 25
 More lovable than he for a lover is a viper
 It is only enmity which his benefit gains you
 And his friendship only bothers and does harm
 You sent to ask me for a praise poem foolishly
 Safra more urgent than you, what resolve!
 Don't you see guidance earned by others than you
 O son of little one-eye which favors you
 How shockingly you exceeded your power to ascend
 How terribly the stars came close to you
 You sought what belonged to Abu Ashar alone 30
 Praise is for one visited and gracious
 And for one at whose gate you were put down
 You approach, one hits your neck and rebukes
 For one who scorns wealth and he is generosity
 For one who heads armies and vast ones
 And for him who when the warriors meet in battle
 Has his portion of that as the master warrior
 And often he turns the lance against the knights
 It bends and then stands firm behind them
 His face is shining and his heart audacious 35
 His lance brown and his sword not dull
 The deeds of one who is nobly born are noble
 The deeds of a stranger born are barbarian.

141 The news came to him that Ibn Kaigalag had threatened him and he spoke. (345)

The word of ignorant Ibn Kaigalag has come to me
 It crossed rough and smooth between us
 If there were not between the son of Safra and me
 A bar other than my lance it is long enough
 And Ishaq feels safe from one who scorns him
 Yet he amuses himself with weeping a bit
 His face is not beautiful so he protects it
 He'd not be pretty even if it were beautiful
 He lies when he says I humiliated him with satire
 Indeed he was base before this mockery.

142 The news came that two slaves of Ibn Kaigalag had killed him and he said. (345)

They said to us: Ishaq is dead. So I said to them:
 This medicine cures him of foolishness
 If he died he died without loss or grief
 If he lived he lived without good or grace

From him the slave learned to split his skull
 To betray friend and hide fraud in flattery
 Not faithful to the oath of a friend's right hand
 Cast off like spear points one after another
 I never knew him other than monkey without tail 5
 A zero of wretchedness filled with temper
 Falling like a feather in the gusts of the wind
 Never stable in the condition of turmoil
 A hand can engulf his temples and his shoulders
 And clothe him with a garment of sweaty wind.
 They asked those who killed him what death they
 Chose for him: Beating or death by fright?
 Was there place for a sword's edge for a fellow
 Who was without any body or head on neck?
 Except for the vile ones and some of his likes 10
 He's the ugliest brat ever wrapped in rags
 Most of the words one hears and his face
 Are such as split the ears and the sight.

143 And he stayed with Ali ibn Askar at Baalbek who treated him well and he spoke excusing himself. (346)

Pour out for us O Ibn Askar, magnanimous man
 Do not stop your bounty to us who thirst
 It would be better not to make gifts to us
 Your farewell and goodbye was without rancor
 We will not worry about your impending loss
 Nor condemn those large favors of yours
 But yet the shower when it comes near
 To the earth of a traveler rejects the cloud.

144 And he spoke in a qasida which he composed in his youth. (347)

The sword of removal is on the top of his neck...
 Not the shaking it against a limb to cut it off
 Rather protection with a shield of patience
 This time blames him because of his admirers
 As it blames its moon to praise him I praise
 He is a sun and when the sun meets him a horse
 Its lights come and go in it as he does
 Beauty is never ugly except when he appears 5
 Nor slave low except before him as lord
 She said: As for gifts, help yourself. So I said:
 A free man won't return until after drinking
 I could not know the good until I knew the youth
 Generosity wasn't born except at his birth
 A soul belittles the soul of the age by greatness
 Its mature wisdom is in its beardless years.

145 He spoke praising Abu Ashar al Husain ibn Hamadan.
(348)

Do you think that she because of the many lovers
 Reckons that tears are natural to the eyes?
 How can she weep who thinks that every eye
 But her own eye sees her with tears undried?
 You were of us in seducing yourself but yet
 You kept free from emaciation and grief
 You forbade the visit so now if you made a visit
 This emaciation would forbid the embrace
 The glance that you kept fixed and that we fixed 5
 Was intended by us but death intervened
 If the distance apart from your fleeing left you
 The fast gait would melt the fat of the camel
 We would travel and if we arrived with her
 I'd be like our souls were at last breath
 What is there for us in love of eyes whose
 Eyelash color is the color of the pupils?
 They shorten the time of the nights that are past
 And lengthen the nights that yet remain
 They increase the gifts of the prince of wealth 10
 Insofar as they bring the hunter's empty bag
 There is no creature other than Abu Ashar
 Who deserves to rule over these men
 A jousting with thrusts that pierce an army corps
 With terror and blood that is poured forth
 Endowed with a flood as if it were within
 He hears of it as he looks down perforce
 One who strikes off heads in the dust and does not
 Have fear lest he drink what he pours out
 On a mare that is ecstasy for a stallion 15
 Between her pasterns and the inner skin
 No disbeliever of the prophet sees her without
 He finds true words in Buraq's description
 His purpose is those who hold lances, not them
 Their points like a waistband around him
 Penetrating of intellect and firm in clemency
 A man has no power over him through fear
 O Banu al Harith ibn Luqman let not those backs
 Of fine horses be lacking to you in battle
 They send terror into the hearts of the enemy 20
 It's as if death comes before the attack
 Almost when they make use of the blade it
 Makes a sheath for itself in the neck
 And when the horsemen tremble from the shock
 Of attack they tremble because of horror
 Every brave man increases his beauty in death
 Like a moon in its fullness moves to the dark
 He is one who makes his armor of death itself
 If there is no shelter from shame short of it
 A generosity that is rough on the side of them 25
 It is like water to polish the thin edges

As to the heights when others claim them
 Betrayal of the theft is unavoidable
 O son of those who when you appeared to me were
 Though absent in person, present in character
 Even if you disguise yourself in attacks on men
 They swear you are his son without a doubt
 How shall the arm be strong for your hand
 When the world in it is a hand in the world?
 There is little use for steel for you because 30
 None meets you but he whose sword is hypocrisy
 The companion of this breath makes more impression
 On the soul because death has a bitter taste
 And grief before the soul departs is weakness
 For there is no grief after departure
 How much wealth relieved with the lance
 That was in chains to stingy people!
 Riches in the hand of a base man are ugly
 As the bane of the generous is in poverty
 My words of your sunny acts are not like a sun 35
 But rather like the dawning of that sun
 Poet of glory whose friend is the poet of words
 Both of us masters of the finest meanings
 You do not cease to listen to the praises but yet
 The whinny of the fine horse is not a heehaw
 Would I had something like luck of these times
 Among ages or its provision among provisions
 You are of it and every time was longing
 For some of this eminence of creation.

146 And he came to him one day and he was drinking and
 before him was a pumpkin spiced with saffron in a
 covered basket on top of which was ambergris sur-
 rounded with a ring of pearls. So he greeted him
 and said: What would you compare this to? So he
 spoke. (354)

But a construction of bamboo conceals
 The pumpkin tended by hand over a fire
 The prince made a necklace of pearls for it
 Which are like his acts and words as witnesses
 Like a cup which the mixing controls by showing
 Some foam that circulates with the dark drink.

147 And he spoke also about it. (354)

It's a black girl with a string of pearls on her
 It has the shape of squash but is ambergris
 As if there were a bit of saffron on her head
 The dawning light of grey in kinky hair.

148 And he spoke also about it. (355)

I have neither wine nor melon for myself
 Black in its rind of bamboo
 I keep from it and from others like it
 It subdues the soul for jousting day
 Every wide thrust has sticky on it
 Tingeing what is between hand and spear head.

149 And he spoke also praising Abu Ashar al Husain ibn
 Ali ibn Hamdan. (355)

I spent the night in Damascus on a mattress
 Whose stuffing had for me heat of my heart
 Tossed by night in color like the eye of a fawn
 And by desire like wine in the bones
 And by love that is burning in the heart
 Like coals in the ribs that seem to flame
 May the blood flow over every blade not dulled
 And pour from every lance not enfeebled
 For the knight is far-famed and the horsemen 5
 Fly from his sword like feathers
 Indeed he is called the father of fierceness
 As if Abu Ashar were not obvious
 And al Husain is forgotten while he is named;
 Death to heroes or shower to the thirsty!
 They meet him unarmored in an armor of blows
 Fine of weave with border flame tested
 As if there were a fire from it on the skulls
 And hands of the people were wings of moths
 As if the flow of the heart's blood were water 10
 From thirst the sword has become used to it
 They have fled among those whose souls are gone
 Those at last gasp and those with reason lost
 Dust flecked by the edge of the sword in whom is
 Concealment of a lizard who fears the hunter
 The front legs of the horses bloodied each other
 And what was on ankles came to the upper leg
 He who is their fear is unique, they do not fear
 His distant army, nor he who seeks an army
 As if the quivering of the arrow in him 15
 Were a trembling of palm leaf on a thin stem
 The plunder of souls of warlike men is more worthy
 Of men of glory than the plunder of property
 The big bellied ones share with us in drinking
 When we attack but they do not share defense
 Before the growth of horn and before maturity
 The sheep is known from the ram for you
 O ocean among the seas, I cannot hide it
 O full moon among full moons, I exclude none
 It's as if you had insight into all hearts 20
 Nor are camps of those who seek hid from you

Shall I keep away if you are stingy with nothing
 And do not accept words of gossips about me?
 But why...? for you among the princes for me
 Are noblest of birds and not of little ones
 One does not fear you with false expectation
 Nor does one hope in you with delusive fears
 You are in all of the horsemen who joust
 Even if they were Iraqi peasants on young asses 25
 I see men as darkness and you as the light
 I among them travel all night to dawn
 With them I suffered the grief of a rose in front
 Of the noses fitted with the bit of wood
 They are against you as you grow thin with nights
 Around you, when you grow fat in the uproar
 News of the prince comes; one says: They attack!
 Then I said: Yes, they have reached Shawshi.
 Never turning back he leads them on to the battle
 His battles reach old age, attacks grow gray
 The dark bay horse is saddled and carries me 30
 On its straining belly and its fastest pace
 One of the ungovernable ones who is protected
 With my lance in every bit of flying blood
 If it is hamstrung it is reported for me to him
 The news is carried on every trotter
 When his station is observed by a barefoot one
 Thorn stung, he won't flinch as it's pulled
 He makes an end to fear of being taken prisoner
 And diverts from boasting because of glory
 No lover is found with the like of my passion 35
 No eagerness is known like my eagerness
 I traveled to you in search of high things
 And others beside me went in search of life.

150 And he sent out a falcon for a partidge and he took
 it so Abu Tayyib spoke. (361)

There's many a bird that death follows
 With whirring wings on its trail
 As if its feathers were on arrows
 With a body as bulky as the wind
 As if the heads of pens were thickened
 With an anointing of fine breast feathers
 So he kills it with the claws on his feet
 That do the work of blades and spears
 So I said: Every living thing has a death day
 Even when souls guard against the ruffian.

151 And Abu Ashar said to him: How quickly you produced
 those verses. So he said. (361)

Do you deny that what I said was impromptu?
 But there is no denying the winning horse
 I hunt difficult words by compulsion
 I make a kill and no one but me is hunting.

152 And he came to him and there was a man with him who
 was reciting verses describing his pool but he did
 not mention him in the verses so Abu Tayyib said.
 (362)

If he indeed did well in the description of it
 He left out beauty in the description for you
 For you are the sea, and the tides in truth
 Cancel out in every respect this pool
 It's as if your sword, not what you possess,
 Remained with--and not what it possesses
 For more than what it pours out is what you give
 And more than that water is what it sheds
 You create difficulties and good things by power
 You revolve over men as the turning heavens.

153 And he spoke also praising Abu Ashar al Husain ibn
 Ali al Hamdan. (362)

Do not think of your quarter nor yet its tell
 As the first life that your parting killed
 Souls have perished before it through you
 And by your love they increased blame of it
 Empty, desolate for us though people are there
 And tents and camels resting from pasture
 If this lover traveled through the heaven
 Its stars wouldn't want the sun in its place
 I love it and love itself and its campsite 5
 For every lover is tenderhearted and mad
 The shower succours it but it is thirsty
 For something else though its clouds pour down
 O destruction that you are O child of its gazelle
 Whether there is staying or going it tells me
 Even if musk and perfume were mingled there
 And you not there I'd think it smelled bad
 I am son of one greater than the father
 Of a geneologist, and child is part of father
 And he reminds ancestors that they are 10
 Those who honor him and exhaust his art
 Honor is for the sword, I rejoice to wear it
 And for the lance, I rejoice to grasp it
 Honor had to do me honor when I came to it
 With a garment of its best and with shoes
 I am he to whom Allah reveals whatever is fated
 And manhood wherever He has placed it

I am the jewel that generosity rejoices in
 The obstruction not swallowed by baseness
 As for the falsehood which he is tricked by 15
 I scorn those who carry it to him
 Not bothered nor hypocritical nor yet
 Shortchanging nor wearied nor impotent
 Many an armored one I sworded and he fell flat
 In the onslaught and the dust and bereavement
 Many a listener I frightened with rhymes
 Exciting him with them and the choice speech
 Often I have been present at a meal and with me
 One not worth the bread which he ate
 He showed his ignorance to me and I let him know 20
 Pearl is pearl in spite of one's not knowing
 It is a shame for Abu Ashar that I
 Should drag his garments in another land
 I trailed it with him among the kings
 His robe feared him due to his companions
 The swords of his slaves are like his gifts
 The first load of his bounty is the rain cloud
 It is not for me to refuse to praise al Husain
 For I cannot lavish love as he lavishes
 Does the watchman at his house fear the news 25
 Or do slanderers achieve what they hoped?
 Or is there no striking off of every head
 That is proud in the hour of furious battle?
 But the master of bounty cannot say farewell
 Even if bounty had a slanderous tongue
 He is a rider on terror and does not weaken
 Even when terror is girded with exhaustion
 Horseman of the red one that moves forward
 Among the Tai with lance in rest in front
 When their horsemen look on his face 30
 He swears by Allah they will not see his back
 They magnify his action and he belittles it
 Greater than his action is he who does it
 The killer, the persevering, the perfect one
 No part of beauty separate from his efforts
 The giver while his spears break through for him
 Jousting and generosity are joined together
 All the time he makes safe the land with raids
 All the time the camps fear his attack
 Each time he appears to the enemy in the morning 35
 He is strong till it seems he lies in wait
 He scorns the sword and the light lance when he
 Pours chain mail on himself or lets it flow
 The understanding educates his mind for me
 And his eloquence educates my poetry
 I was like the sword praising his hand
 The sword does not praise all who bear it.

154 He was with him one night drinking and each time he

wanted to rise he gave him something until he gave
him a garment and a girl and a colt so he spoke.
(368)

Does the wind blow softly at my command
And the cloud rejoice me each time I desire?
On the contrary, the cloud has its own nature
Which shines from it and so does nobility.

155 And Abu Ashar intended to make a journey and he spoke
saying farewell. (368)

Men who have not seen you are much alike
Time is a word and you are its meaning
Bounty is an eye and its vision is in you
Men shake hands and you are the right hand
I am ransom for all those who are hard pressed
By battle dust as his knights protect him
The tip of al Husain's lance is the middle of it
And the top of the warrior is in his legs
Our garments sing the panegyrics for him 5
With tongues which have no mouths
When we passed by a deaf man with them on
His eyes had no need for his two ears
Glory be to Him who allotted distance to stars
Otherwise they would get to be his bounty
If the light of the suns were in his hand
His generosity and art would diffuse it
O travelers, everyone who says good-bye to him
Says farewell to his religion and his world
If there can be in what we see of generosity 10
Any growth in you, may Allah increase it.

156 It was said to Abu Ashar: You are not known except
by your surname and yet Abu Tayyib does not use it.
(369)

They said: Don't you use his surname? So I said:
That is impossible when we describe him
Abu Ashar is not given his due as one for whom
The meanings of men are like his meaning
Most knightly is one who when his horse swims
The waves are nothing but those of iron.

157 Abu Ashar brought out for him a fine cuirasse and he
said. (370)

With this and the like of it the ranks are split
 And the last gasp ceases by greeting it
 But throw it away for you by reason of nobility
 Are its breast plate, sword and spear.

158 They set up an awning for Abu Ashar on the road at
 Mayyafariqun and his clients thronged around him
 and pressed on him so he spoke impromptu. (370)

People blame Abu Ashar on account of
 The bounty of his hand with gold and silver
 And it is said: Why were you made in this way?
 The Maker of men is Maker of character.
 They said: Why does not generosity restrain him
 From setting up his tent on the road?
 I said: Because the bravery of a young man
 Shows him in stinginess a kind of fear
 The sun inhabits the heavens but yet
 Her distance does not veil her from the eye
 By striking off heads of warriors a reward
 Is earned by him that others earn by flattery
 Be an ocean, O magnanimous one, for indeed
 His sword makes one safe from drowning.

5

159 He spoke and traced to Abu Ashar some men who wanted
 to kill him at night on behalf of Saif al Daula and
 he recalled that because of this affair they attacked
 him. (371)

What happened to me is traced to one I love
 The whirl of arrows about me from his hand
 He attacks from love of me, and not from baseness
 Do I love but rather I unite with generosity
 No friendship can endure with injury
 Weakness prolongs my love for al Husain
 And if there is an act which harms uniquely
 Yet his acts that rejoiced us are myriad
 My soul is his; may it be ransom for his soul
 Yet some of these owners are too severe.

SAIFIYYAT

160 And he spoke praising Saif al Daula Abu al Hassan
 Ali ibn Abd Allah ibn Hamdan at his descent to
 Antakya and his completing the conquest of Hisn
 Barzuia in the latter part of Jumada in the year
 337. (373)

Loyalty in you two: spring camp whose traces pine
 By it you help as tears in its showers heal it
 And yet I am nothing but a lover and every lover
 The more refractory of two good friends blames
 They wear clothes of love not being of its family
 A man takes as friend one he doesn't agree with
 I die of grief of the tell if I do not stand here
 As a miser does who loses a ring in the dust
 Broken-hearted, the censurers warn me against love 5
 As a saddle girth warns a newly broken colt
 Stop, the first glance must pay a fine to my heart
 With a second, for destroyers of a thing pay
 May Allah pour out for you and revive us by you
 On the camel a flower and curtains its petals
 Departing women near you in the dark have no need
 For a moon, they do not lack it who love you
 When the eyes obtain a glance from you
 They rally a weary camel with it and feed it
 A lover who it seems is beloved by beauty who 10
 Chose him or was unjust in sharing fine traits
 The Khatti lances forbid taking him captive
 His generosity takes captives of every tribe
 Dust of horses shows the nearest of his curtains
 The farthest is spreading incense which clings
 My eye did not think parting strange when I saw it
 Nor did it teach me except what the heart knew
 Those who brooded hatred did not suspect me
 I fed on death until the colcynth was sweet
 Old is he who weeps for youth that made him gray 15
 Why dread it when the builder is wrecker?
 Perfection of life is youth and what follows it
 Lost color in sideburns and what precedes it
 A man does not dye his white hair because it is
 Ugly but rather because black hair is finest
 But more handsome than all the water of youth is
 A shower flashing awning and me forecasting
 Upon it are meadows which the clouds do not water
 Branches of high trees whose doves do not coo

On the borders of every double edged strip 20
 A thread of pearl, no composer pierced it
 You see animals of the land reconciled there
 Contrary wars against contrary and makes peace
 When the wind strikes it billows as if
 It made the horse prance and the lion crouch
 Among images the Rum owning a crown submitting
 To a dawn that has no crown except the turban
 It is the lips of the kings that kiss his carpet
 His sleeve and fingers too great for them
 Waiting for him whose fire cures from sickness 25
 Whose brand is twist the ears of every hero
 Their sword hilts beneath their elbows are in fear
 Penetrated by one whose will is in his eyelids
 He has an army of horses and birds when he attacks
 An army with them, only its skulls remain
 Their horsecloths are the robes of every tyrant
 Their treading is on mouths of every despot
 The light of dawn pales as they raid with him
 Black night yields as they press round him
 The spears tire as they strike his upper parts 30
 Indian steel is weary as it pounds him
 A cloud of eagles moves onward, beneath that is
 A cloud whose swords pour out when they thirst
 I followed changes of the times until I met him
 On the back of resolve, his legs firm fixed
 Deserts where his soul would not accompany a wolf
 And where wings would not bear a raven
 I saw a moon such as moon never saw the like of
 I addressed a sea where swimmer sees no shore
 I was angry for him when I saw his description 35
 Without describer and poem whose babblers raved
 And when I was crossing those distant lands
 I went at night and was a secret night hid
 Glory has drawn the sword of state as a standard
 For glory cannot hide nor blows dull it
 On the shoulder of highest rule is his sword belt
 In the hand of heaven's strength is his hilt
 The enemy wars on him but yet they are his slaves
 They heap up wealth and that is his plunder
 They magnify the times but times are less than he 40
 They wonder at death but death is his servant
 And he who named him Ali was fair in that
 But he who named him sword did him injustice
 Not every sword has edge that strikes off heads
 His bounty breaks the drought of the times.

161 He spoke praising Saif al Daula when he was intending to make a journey to Antakya. (383)

Where do you intend to go, O magnanimous prince?
 We are plants of hills and you the cloud

We are one that time pressed hard on due to you
 And the days have cheated us of your presence
 On the high road is your struggle and peace
 And this the place of abode and the reins
 Would that we were horses for you as you saddle
 And when you alight that we were the tent
 Every day is a new departure for you 5
 And an expedition to glory where home is
 And whenever souls are unlimited
 The bodies are consumed by their intentions
 And thus the full moons rise above us
 And thus the mighty oceans are disturbed
 The beautiful habit of patience is ours
 If only the burden is other than your absence
 Every life which you do not sweeten is death
 Every sun which is not you is darkness
 Make an end to the loneliness which we feel 10
 O you whom huge armies are intimate with
 Who witness the battle with settled heart
 As though the struggle there was guaranteed
 You who are striking the companies until
 The vertebra in the neck and the feet meet
 And when he makes camp for an hour at a place
 It is forbidden to time to damage it
 So that which the lands grow is happiness
 That which the clouds rain is wine
 Whenever it is said: There's an end. He shows us 15
 Bounty such as generosity never guided to it
 And striking before which the enemy faints
 Cheerful giving at which men are amazed
 The respect that Saif al Daula, the hoped for,
 Has in our hearts as a king is a sword
 It is much for the brave to be on their guard
 It is much for the eloquent to say: Peace.

162 And he spoke at the departure of Saif al Daula from Antakya in a rainstorm. (386)

Be easy with yourself O splendid king
 Delay and count it among what you give
 Your bounty is in staying if only a little
 But it is not small inssofar as you give it
 Put down the envious for I see enemies
 As if they were your farewell and going
 This cloud is appeased for we doubted
 Whether Taglib or its rain was your tribe
 I have blamed those who censure generosity 5
 But here am I censuring his bounty
 I do not fear misfortune for you on the way
 For Saif al Daula is sharp and burnished
 And every head of the chiefs hopes that
 The road for your journey is his hair part

It seems that the hollows are full of blood
 And the horses run with you in its flow
 When a hero becomes used to wading in death
 He scorns the filth which he passes there
 He who commands forts so they do not press him 10
 The rough and smooth places submit to him
 Can you protect everyone whom the nights attack
 Can you revive everyone whom obscurity buries?
 We call you the sword but is there a sword
 That brings to life the bodies of the dead?
 The only activity for the sword is cutting
 But you are the just slicer that joins
 You are the knight who cries: Have courage!
 When the word and the whinny fade away
 The lance swerves from you though well aimed 15
 It comes short of striking though it is long
 And if the spear had the power of the tongue
 It would say to you as a spear what I say
 If eternity is a reward you alone are immortal
 But there is no true friend for the world.

163 And he spoke lamenting the death of Saif al Daula's
 mother consoling him for her in the year 337. (388)

We prepared the fine swords and long spears
 But death beats us without a struggle
 And we tether the swift horses close at hand
 But they do not escape from prowling nights
 And who has not loved the world that is past?
 But yet there is no way to rejoin it
 The share you have in a loved one during life
 Is the share you have in a dream in sleep
 The times have hit me with misfortunes until 5
 My heart was fainting with the missiles
 And I had a feeling that when an arrow struck me
 The head of one broke on the head of another
 It was easy so I didn't worry about calamity
 For I could find no use in being bothered
 But this is the first of all the death notices
 For the first dead lady with such importance
 It is as if death had never surprised a soul
 Nor shaken a creature with anxiety
 Blessing of Allah our creator is embalming spice 10
 For the face of the one shrouded in beauty
 For the one buried in protection before the dust
 And before the tomb in generous qualities
 For it in the womb of the earth there is a person
 Renewed so that we remember though it decays
 There is not one who is immortal among earthlings
 No, the world is in pursuit of cessation
 It is good for the soul that you died a death
 That survivors and deceased would have desired

You ceased but you never saw a hateful day 15
 Such that the spirit rejoiced in its ending
 An awning of glory above stood for long
 The kingdom of Ali your son was perfection
 May he water your house with a shower at dawn
 Equal to the gifts of your hand in bounty
 A downpour in a sweeping stream on the grave
 Like the hoof of horses that see the feed bags
 After you I have asked of every glory about you
 But no thought of glory is empty of you for me
 The beggar passes your tomb and he sheds tears 20
 And the weeping keeps him from the begging
 And he cannot guide you to giving for him
 Would that you had the power of acting
 By your life! have you forgotten while my heart
 Though far from your land is not consoled
 You have gone down to a place that is hateful
 Removed yourself from the south and the north
 Veiled from you is the perfume of the khuzami
 Forbidden for you the smell of the rain
 In a camp where all of the dwellers are strangers 25
 Long the flight and broken the ropes
 Pure as the water of a rain cloud in which
 A secret was hidden, a word was faithful
 A physician skilled in complaints attended her
 Her only one, a physician of the heights
 When they described to him a disease of the border
 He poured in the points of long lances
 And she was not like a woman nor yet those
 For whom the tomb of a bride chamber is made
 Nor were those in her funeral cortege hirelings 30
 Whose farewell was shaking dust from shoes
 The commanders walked barefoot about her
 As if the stones were fluff of ostriches
 The curtains of the veiled ones were brought out
 They had applied soot in place of rouge
 The calamity had come to them unexpectedly
 Tears of grief in place of tears of laughter
 And if these women were like that one we lost
 Then women would be superior to men
 Nor would the feminine name of the sun be shame 35
 Nor the masculine be a boast to the moon
 Most painful of those we lose are those we know
 Before the loss we have lost the pattern of
 Some of us bury the others and the last of us
 Tramples on the skulls of the first
 How many are the eyes whose eyebrows were kissed
 Now have the kohl of pebbles and sand
 Many a downcast eye did not look down for fate
 Many a decayed one pondered the loss of weight
 O Saif al Daula ask assistance of patience 40
 How can mountains have patience like yours?
 For you are the one who instruct men in courage
 And the death plunge in the stream of battle

The changes of the times are wintry for you
 But your condition is one in every change
 May your seas never be empty O abundance
 For watering the strangers and the strays
 I see you among those that I know as kings
 As if you were straight among the crooked
 You surpass mankind and yet you are of them 45
 For the musk is part of the gazelle's blood.

164 He spoke praising him and commemorating the rescue
 of Abu Wa'il Taglib ibn Da'ud when he was taken pri-
 soner by the Kharajites among the Kalb and he defeat-
 ed the Kharajites in Shaban in the year 337. (395)

How long will this eagerness for censure last?
 There is no sense in love for a reasonable man
 He wants forgetfulness of the heart from you
 But nature it is that rejects such a change
 Indeed I am in love through love of you
 With my emaciation and every emaciate youth
 And if you ceased to be I would not weep for you
 I would weep for my love that ceased to be
 Can my cheek deny my tears when in fact 5
 They flow from it in a well traveled path?
 Is this the first tear that flows over it
 Is this the first grief for a departure?
 I leave consolation to the one who blames me
 And spend the night in the work of love
 As if the eyelids that were over my eyes
 Were garments rent because of bereavement
 And if I were a prisoner of any other but love
 I would become a hostage for Abu Wa'il
 He ransomed himself with a pledge of pure gold 10
 But he gave the nipple of the flexible lance
 He endowed them with horses reserved for war
 And they came with all the brave youths
 It was as if the liberation of Abu Wa'il
 Meant the return of the darkened moon
 He called and you heard, how many silent ones
 Though far away seem to be speaking to you
 You came to him and with you a great army
 As a pledge for him, as a surety to him
 They came from a cloud of dust on the horizon 15
 And from sweat of running in torrent
 And when they dried out they felt the whips
 As if they were rocks in a rainless land
 They looked five days for the one they sought
 Before the sight of the place to descend
 Their legs sank in the dirt to their ankles
 Trusting that they would be washed in blood
 And what was between the thighs of the avengers
 Was like that between the thighs of a pissur

So they confronted all of the Rudaini lances 20
 For they had drunk milk of the dry camels
 And the army of the leader on a camel as well
 Perfected in the leadership to falsehood
 And so they turned and were outflanked by him
 Like bees frightened and the beeman
 Thus when you appeared to his companions
 Their lions saw the devourer and his prey
 With blows he shared with them unequally
 For him the portion was just to them
 With strokes he collected their scattered groups 25
 As the stream from the udder collects itself
 And whenever you looked at the horsemen
 You perplexed their legs away from flight
 Thus he continues to dye their beards but
 As a hero he does not count on its fading
 And he does not ask for help from allies
 Nor is he routed by being forsaken
 Nor does he withhold his horse from the front
 Nor turn his eye away from the terror
 When he seeks revenge it does not escape him 30
 Even though the debt is deferred
 Take what he brings you here and excuse him
 For the plunder is for those who are swift
 And if this year of yours has confused you
 Then come back to Homs in the next one
 For the sword tinged with blood which
 Beat you is still in the hand of a killer
 He makes a gift with that which you aimed at
 But you did not achieve it as a suppliant
 At the head of the army he will shine there 35
 In place of the spear point for the bearer
 I am indeed amazed at the expectations
 For a killing with a sleeve on an old camel
 Did not Allah tell him about not meeting those
 Who have the sword on high spirited horses?
 Whenever you strike the skulls with that
 It trims them and sings for you on shoulders
 He was not the first possessed of ambitions
 That drew him to what could not be obtained
 He girded the skirt from his feet for the depths 40
 But the waves engulfed him on the shore
 Is there not in the caliphate anyone who cares
 For its sword of state that brings order?
 He cuts off its enemies without a stroke
 And travels to them without being borne
 You leave their skulls in the sandy hillocks
 And they cannot be recovered with a sieve
 But you make them grow into meadows for beasts
 And they praise your universal good qualities
 And you return to Aleppo as a conqueror 45
 Like a jewel returns to an unadorned one
 It was such a matter which you trod barefoot
 That would have torn feet with shoes

How many a story about you is published
 That has the piebald of a pinto shining
 Many a day the drinking is with death's brothers
 The most hated presence as the intruder
 You make an end of slavery and enrich the beggar
 And forgive the sins of the ignorant
 May he who gives you victory bless it to you 50
 May your efforts content him in the end of life
 For this world is more deceiving than a harlot
 And trickier than the gin of a trapper
 Men wither away with infatuation for her
 And do not achieve anything lasting.

165 And he spoke during the journey to his brother Nasser
 al Daula when he began a campaign against Mu'izz al
 Daula in the year 337. (402)

The height of a kingdom is built on spears
 And jousting among its lovers is like kissing
 And swords do not establish its dominion
 Until they quiver a time beforehand over heads
 In this way the prince seeking power is offered
 Long lances and gifts of horses and camels
 And determination; desire moves it. Zuh al
 Is beneath it in the place of earth to Zuh al
 Over the Forat is a whirlwind and in Aleppo 5
 Depopulation due to meeting youthful Nasser
 His lances follow letters which go ahead
 And he makes cavalry substitute for messengers
 He meets kings but only as sheep for slaughter
 They do not defy him for he meets only plunder
 The Caliph protects his blood with heroes
 Cherishing the Indian steel with a scabbard
 He does a deed that isn't done due to difficulty
 Speaks words not forsaken nor lessened
 He sends out armies whose dust assassinates 10
 The light of day, so noon becomes twilight
 The plain is narrowest when its clouds meet it
 The sun's eye there is the most confused
 He gives further than it does and it is an eye
 That does not approach him except in fear
 He has opposed the sword to his attackers there
 And put resolution between him and deceit
 He suspects secrets and they are revealed
 His the hid things of folk of plain and hill
 He is the brave one who thinks avarice dastardly 15
 Bounteous, he finds a faint heart stingy
 He returns from every conquest without boasting
 And he hurries to it without any anxiety
 Fate does not forbid him any of his desires
 Nor can armor protect the blood of a warrior

When I put a robe on him for the sake of honor
 I found it on him more fine than any robe
 For the ignorant the reciting of it is wrong
 Like the rose's perfume is harmful to beetles
 Indeed every eye looks its fill of you 20
 Best of the state prove the good of the sword
 The enemy cannot uncover for you any weariness
 Of warring, nor can counselors any faults
 How many men without land for their numbers
 You have left, all of them, land without men
 Your horse does not cease to run in their blood
 Until it goes the gait of drunkard for you
 O he goes forth and the eyes' judgment is his
 Whatever they see and heart's judgment is joy
 For happiness exists as you are creator of it 25
 You succeed whether in the saddle or out of it
 Make your horses run as you have made them go
 Take for yourself in your nature's prime
 They stare from eyes whose sockets the knights'
 Strokes bloodied with dripping lances
 You do not attack with them except in conquest
 You do not arrive with them except at your hopes.

166 And he spoke praising him and asked to accompany him
 on this journey. (406)

Go! May the flowers grow wherever you settle
 Destiny intends in you whatever you intend
 And when you saddle up health accompanies you
 Wherever you go continuous showers pour
 Your fate shows you what it wants for the enemy
 Until it seems its calamities are allies
 You come back the richest returning from water
 The eyes are raised to your approach
 You are the one in whose memory the times rejoice 5
 And evening talk is adorned with its stories
 And when you refuse, destruction is the end of it
 And if he forgives then his gift is life
 And even if kings give, his is beneficence
 The stream of kings to that stream is dregs
 By Allah your heart does not fear any death
 But it fears lest some shame approach you
 You flee from the tendencies of human nature
 And the numerous army flees from you
 O he is hard on the harshness of his neighbor 10
 And the strong one is subdued in his assaults
 Be where you like for no desert can intervene
 Between the meeting, nor the visit be far
 The least emaciation that I have from your love
 Makes the camel thin as the journey shortens
 Truly those whom I left behind me are lost
 But not by my choice but my passion for him

And if I am with him every water is sweet,
 Though not familiar, and every land is home
 Permission of the prince that I return to them 15
 Is a gift that poetry will carry in its memory.

167 He spoke lamenting the death of the son of Saif al
 Daula who died at Mayyafariqun in the year 338. (408)

We above ground have in you what you have in sand
 And this consumes just as that wears one out
 It is as if you saw what I have, and feared it
 When you lived and chose death over bereavement
 You left the cheek of a singing girl and over it
 The tears melted the beauty in the wide eyes
 She drenches the black powder of musk unmingled
 And it has dripped crimson on the thick hair
 Though you are in a tomb yet you are in the heart 5
 If you are a child yet grief is not for a child
 Such as you are not wept for according to years
 But rather according to chivalry and lineage
 Are you not from people who had as their lances
 Their bounty; among their foes avarice's soul?
 In their infancy silent of tongue as others
 Yet in their faces was a speaking excellence
 Their lofty ideals console them in every mishap
 Earning praise distracts them from other work
 Less worried in battle than the lances 10
 More forward between the armies than arrows
 Your patience Saif al Daula is followed as model
 You are a blade and hardship is for blades
 Remaining in the conflict at every stage
 As if you were a relative of every sword
 I see none more defiant to grief's tears than you
 More firm in reason when heart has no reason
 Death betrayed its compact with his offspring
 But it aided him among knights and soldiers
 His courage holds through the lapse of events 15
 He shows like the sword shows in the burnish
 He who is possessed of a soul like your free soul
 Is self-sufficient due to it and consoled
 Death is nothing but a thief with an airy shape
 It attacks without hands and runs without feet
 A father of cubs repels spearmen from his son
 But he yields at its birth to the ants
 By my soul a child returns after its birth
 To the womb of a mother who has no labor pains
 He appeared and held promise of a cloudburst 20
 He died and left us the thirst of barren land
 The thoroughbred horse had turned its eyes
 Toward the time to change from shoes to bridle
 The enemy's army feared him before he walked
 Vehement war raged at him before he had grown

Has a dusty earth weaned him before his weaning
 And eaten him before he got to the food?
 Before he sees of his nobility what you see
 And hears of it what you hear from the critic?
 He finds as you find something of peace and war 25
 Grasps as you grasp a kingdom without compare
 His lances let him rule the middle of the land
 Their points protect him from withdrawal
 We weep for our dead who had no desire
 Pass from a world which was no great gift
 When you reflect on the times and their changes
 You are sure that death is a kind of murder
 Is a beloved child anything but an illness
 Solitude with beauty merely evil to a spouse?
 I have tasted the sweetness of sons in youth 30
 Don't think I said what I said ignorantly
 Fate is not wider than my knowledge of its affair
 Nor do the days write better than my hopes
 The age is not worthy that one should hope for
 Life from it even if one longs for children here.

168 And he also spoke impromptu when he asked for the description of a horse that had come to him. (414)

The place of horses in your bounty is small
 Even if there were a thousand steeds in it
 And of words a word sums up the description
 And that is: This is completely good.
 There is no option for us in bounty from you
 Everything which a nobleman gives is noble.

169 He spoke as he chose between two horses: a roan and a black. (415)

I take the roan of these two O rainfall
 O you choicest among the virtues
 You are one who if blamed in a company
 Would only be blamed because he is human
 And these his gifts were swords and horses
 And brown lances and whole camel herds
 One who puts his enemies to shame as if they 5
 Decreased for each time they increased
 May Allah protect you from their arrows
 He fails whose target is the moon.

170 And Saif al Daula ordered the presentation of a robe of honor to Abu Tayyib so he spoke. (416)

It achieved for us an act of heaven for its earth
 A robe of the prince and his right not annulled
 As if fineness in its weave was from his words
 The beauty of its brightness from his honor
 And when you rely on the nobility of his opinion
 In bounty, the purity of his taste is clear.

171 And he spoke also praising him. (416)

No dream is generous with him nor with his image
 Only a memory of his farewell and his loss
 Sleep it was that brought back his ghost to us
 His return was the ghost of his ghost
 We passed a night, he gave us wine from his hand
 And did not think in his heart we saw him
 We gathered stars from the necklace on his neck
 We got the eye of the sun from his ankle ring
 You parted from the eye that was wounded by you 5
 And settled in the thought of a dejected heart
 You were close and your coming was from him
 Were generous and your bounty was his wealth
 Indeed I hate the phantom of him whom I love
 Since he fled us at the time of its embrace
 It was like passion and grieving and sorrow when
 I parted from him, they told of his departure
 And I retaliated against love and made it taste
 In my purity what I had tasted of his grief
 Indeed I have reserved for every land a time 10
 That will scare the lion away from his cubs
 Then front will meet front and between them
 Will be blows as death roams his tract
 And I have concealed the fine wine of my word
 But poured the red for one I drank with
 And when the coursers stumbled on its plains
 I crossed its mountains without a fall
 I traversed a vast desert land on a white camel
 Used to it, exploring it, destroyed by it
 He goes his gait as if the nags ran behind him 15
 In their strength, and he won in his fatigue
 And they without hobbles are scared of him
 But he passes them speeding with his hobble
 Then success appears and he rejoices in his legs
 Gaiety comes and he exults in his gait
 I shared the rule of the Hashimi in their sword
 And I entered the royal lair for its lion
 One whose perfection is forbidden to the lions
 The prey forgets his fear because of his beauty
 The princes are humbled round about his throne 20
 He looks at his clients and this is his food
 He kills before his battle and sends good news
 Before his gifts, and gives before asked

The winds when they come to one who awaits them
 Find their coming relieves his need for haste
 He makes gifts and endows kings with his pardon
 Until humankind are equal in his generosity
 When enriched by his gift on his initiative
 He repeats and dispenses with their: Repeat it.
 It is as if his generosity in its greatness 25
 Were jealous of his clients in their smallness
 The stars set and go down short of his ambition
 They rise, when they rise, short of his giving
 Allah makes his fortune propitious every day
 And he increases his family with his enemies
 If he does not make their hearts' blood flow
 Over his swords it flows with his good luck
 They do not leave an imprint on him from battle
 Except for their bloodstains upon his armor
 For such as him alone a huge host gathers itself 30
 By such as him his enemies' armies are broken
 Attend O moon whose face is made for shining
 Do not tell lies for you are not of his type
 And when the deep sea swells then admonish it:
 Leave that, for you are weak compared to him!
 He gives what he got of ancestors and can't feel
 Their acts belong to a son without his acts
 When inheritance is lost except for high ideals
 He seeks the enemy with the long lance
 With a vast army that wears the dust about them 35
 Over their armor and trails it as a skirt
 It is as if the day were blinded by its dust
 Or cast down its eyes from him in his glory
 The army is your army except you are its army
 As its heart and its right and its left
 It drinks the bitter jousting with its knights
 It brings down the warriors with its warriors
 Everyone desires his soldiers for his life's sake 40
 O he desires his life for his men
 Bitterness comes before sweetness of the times
 You cannot reach it except after terror
 For this reason only Ali is able to achieve it
 And acquire by his sword what he hopes for.

172 And he spoke also praising him. (423)

I am in the midst of benefits and noble acts
 By your good wishes in a steady shower
 Things you scorn are all those you lavish
 At them I look as with the eyes of a dreamer
 Truly the caliphate did not name you its sword
 Until it tested you and you were true sword
 When it was crowned you were the jewel of a crown
 When it set a seal you were the gem of a ring

When you unsheathed against the enemy in battle 5
 They perished; his hand held back the hilt
 Always your bounty exhausts all who are ready
 To describe it, and hinders arm that hides it.

173 And he spoke praising Saif al Daula who had ordered
 a bay horse and a girl for him. (424)

Does the quarter know whose blood is spilled
 And what sort of heart in this rider suffers?
 For us and for its people there are always hearts
 That meet in bodies that do not meet
 The wind does not sweep this campsite for him
 He who drives for them and guides defaced it
 Would that the love of the beloved were just
 So as to load every heart as it could bear 5
 I watched them and the eye was udder full
 And all of it was a duct for the tears
 And the moon had reached the full among them
 And it gave me the sickness of its waning
 Between hair and feet there was a beaming
 That guided the camels without a bridle
 An eye, if one poured the beloved a cup of it,
 Loss would give me a drink overflowing
 A waist that vision fixed itself upon
 As if there were a belt of eyes upon it
 My horse and my sword console me for my way 10
 In life, and my spear and swift, rangy camel
 We put behind the white camel the land of Nejd
 And turned aside from Samawa and Iraq
 She did not stop looking though night was dark
 For Saif al Daula the king of the lightning
 Her guide was a musky wind that came from him
 When she opened her nostrils she sniffed
 He leaves the enemy to the beasts, O beasts
 Why do you confront this traveling party?
 If you follow that which the spear drives on 15
 It suffices to keep you from our poor camels
 And if we journeyed to him on the high roads
 Of sun and moon we would not fear burning
 He is the leader of the leaders of the Quraish
 Against those who threaten him with schism
 He is a sword against them when they rage
 And a driver in the battle when they rebel
 They should not be ignorant of his smiles
 When attacks bloody mouths and oppress hard
 The lances have guaranteed him the blood 20
 And he loads his will on the fine horses
 When they are shod for tracking people
 Though they are far they make them soles
 And if the cry for help is faint from a place
 They prick up their fine ears for him

And the jousting between them in response to it'
 Comes after a wait as between two milkings
 So they are tossing their forelocks at death
 Accustoming their riders to catastrophe
 His lances spend the night above the necks 25
 And the dust is set up for them as a tent
 They bend as if the wine from the warriors
 Repeated there the morning and evening cup
 The wine wonders, for he has drunk it but
 Is not drunk, is generous and recovers
 Poetry stands by awaiting the giving
 When it exceeds in a shower that surpasses
 We pay the price of the bay horse from it
 And we promise to pay for the girl with dowry
 Allah forbid! your mercy could be imitated 30
 Or your generosity could be immortalized
 But we were only joking with you as the chief
 Old camels yield to him as in the prime
 He is a hero whose band plunders no corpse
 But his pardon plunders prisoners of chains
 You do not come with benefits to me by chance
 Nor do I gain them from you as if in theft
 Tell those who stir envy of me with you that
 The lightning misses that tries to hit me
 For of what use are the letters to the enemy 35
 When one does not have the fine edged sword?
 As for mankind that intelligent men have tested
 They tasted but I have eaten them
 I do not find their love other than trickery
 I see their belief only as hypocrisy
 Every sea falls short of your right hand
 And what you cannot take of that I take
 But for the power of creation we would say:
 Is your character intentional or by chance?
 May war never alight from the saddle for you 40
 Nor the world ever give a taste of farewell.

174 And he spoke praising and lamenting Abu Wa'il Taglib
 ibn Da'ud in Jumadi the first in the year 338. (430)

Sickness does not cling to any one born
 More nobly than Taglib ibn Da'ud
 He was one to disdain a death in bed
 The most reliable promise was made to him
 Such as he refused a death which was
 Without a saddle on a fast, long horse
 After the imprint of the lance on his breast
 And his striking off the heads of chiefs
 And his plunge into the depths of destruction 5
 Where the heart of a brave man trembles
 And if we are patient, well we are flinty
 And if we weep it is no reproach

And if we grieve for him it is no wonder
 Such an ebb tide in the sea was unthought of
 Where are the gifts which were distributed
 To the assemblies and the individuals?
 The safety of good people after their parting
 Escapes from grief but not from eternity
 For what can souls hope for from a time 10
 Whose best condition is without praise?
 The misfortunes of the times know me well
 For long I have tested wood with my teeth
 I have that which strikes back at catastrophe
 And makes me familiar with black misfortune
 When he asked you for help you did not stay back
 In the sheath O sword of the Banu Hashim
 O most generous of the generous O king of kings
 O hunter of all the hunters anywhere
 He had died once before this and the blows 15
 Of Khatti lances on the throat set him free
 And your attack was at night with soldiers
 You struck their eyelids with wakefulness
 The lean cavalry came upon them toward morning
 Among the troops up to the people
 Their scabbards bore the ransom for them
 They paid cash in blows like furrows
 His stroke was on the bone of their skulls
 Its scent was in the nostrils of beasts
 He lost the life which you gave to him 20
 With nobility he was grateful and loyal
 He was sick in body but sound in generosity
 Afflicted with evil, an aid of grief
 Then death appeared with his chains
 The hand with shackles did not loose him
 The perishing did not diminish the numbers
 Of him, Ali, making deserts too small for him
 His troops go back and forth across its flats
 With blasts of winds that come and go
 They write the first letter of his name 25
 Those hoofs of the horses on the rock
 Whenever one consoles the young prince for him
 Let it not be his boldness and bounty
 It is our wish that he endure forever
 So he may be consoled by all who are born.

175 He spoke and Saif al Daula was riding to see off his
 slave Yamak when he was attacking Raqqa at the front
 and the wind was blowing violently. (434)

The escorted one is not lacking to the escorted
 Would that the winds would do what you do
 They are up early perforce but you have a reason
 You are the smooth plain and they the rough

You are the only one and they are four
 You are the hard wood and the kings the soft.

176 He spoke as he was travelling to Raqqa and there was
 a heavy rain at a place called Thadin. (434)

By my eyes! every day with you is lucky
 They are excited by some wonderful affair
 The attack of this sword is against a sword
 The downpour of this cloud is on a cloud
 The earth will dry after this shower
 What clothes it as a dress is created
 But the moisture from you will never cease
 And your shower will continue to pour
 Cavalry and early clouds accompany you 5
 In a journey of joyful lovers
 They are ransom for your bounty and imitate it
 But they fall short of your sweet nature.

177 He spoke and Saif al Daula complimented him and was
 compliant. (435)

I slander when I think of you in metaphors
 Bounty comes, one talks of you and you hate it
 And when I see you opposed to honor
 I am sure that Allah desires to increase it.

178 He spoke and Saif al Daula added to his description.
 (436)

Much blood has been shed by Saif al Daula
 And many verses have enraged the kings
 He who knows the sun does not deny its rising
 Or sees a horse doesn't admire a pregnant mare
 You endow with wealth the flock you own
 For the land and the world are yours.

179 He spoke and they were in the midst of mountains on
 the way to Amid. (436)

This sword moves forward toward his hopes
 But the sword does not achieve his acts
 When he traverses the plain he spreads far
 And in the mountains he moves upward
 You by what you give us are a king
 Who bears fruit from his wealth for his flock

As if you among us were the lion
Who teaches his cubs how to devour.

180 Some people criticized him for saying: Would that
when you saddled up I were the horse and when you
came down I were the tent. And they said: The tent
is above him. So he said. (437)

They have in fact elevated a tent to nobility
I reject the interpretation absolutely
I do not grant a place above you to the Thurya
I do not grant a place above you to the sky
You have laid waste the land of Syria until
You plundered its quarters of bright dress
They sigh and Awasim is ten nights from you
Yet the sweetness is smelled in the air.

181 Saif al Daula mentioned the grandfather and father
of Abu Ashar and Abu Tayyib spoke. (437)

More masterful of two sides is that you are on
The lord of lineage he who relates to it
This is one whose grandfather and father you are
Being nearer than his grandfather or father.

182 He spoke and Muezzin was calling so Saif al Daula put
the cup from his hand. (438)

O you call but not to recall the forgetful
Nor do you soften one hard of heart
The prince is not distracted from the heights
Nor from claims of his Creator by a cup.

183 And Saif al Daula mentioned a verse that he wanted
to have added to and it was: I went at the early
departure to meet the beauty * And I did not see any-
thing sweeter than you in eye or heart. So he spoke.
(438)

We ransom you, best of men for share of my heart
Most deadly for the armored ones not at war
Love is unique in its rule over its people
You are lovely in obstinacy, fair in falsehood
I am indeed protected from death in battle
Even though I am devoted to death in love

He who has your eyes between his eyelids
Finds the slope of a plain on a steep ascent.

184 He spoke also praising Saif al Daula at Mayyafariqun
as he commanded the army to horse and combat and armor and preparedness and this was in the month Shawwal the year 338. (439)

Whenever it was praise a love prelude came first
Do all the eloquent speak the poetry of love?
The love of Ibn Abdallah is nearer, for by this
Beautiful memory begins and ends in him
I submitted to maids until the desire of my eyes
For a vision that dwarfs others and enlarges
Saif al Daula is set over against the entire age
He strikes at its limbs and he pierces
His judgment increases until it is above the sun 5
His beauty shines until it is above the moon
As if enemies in their lands were his vicars
As he desires they hold them or surrender
No letters except the Mashrafi swords for him
No messengers but battalions of huge armies
Not lacking in aid from anyone who has a hand
Or lacking in thanks of one who has a mouth
Nor does the wood of the pulpit lack his names
Nor do the dinars or the dirhams lack them
A striker when that between the swords is narrow 10
Foresighted when darkness is among the brave
They compete as shooting stars in every night;
His stars and among them the red and the roan
They trample a warrior whom they did not bear
And fragments of spears which could not resist
And they are running with the wolves on land
And they swim with the big fish in the sea
They are hid with the gazelles in the valley
They hover with the eagles among the peaks
And when men obtain the ashwood then he 15
With them and their breasts smashes through
By his eminence in war and peace and argument
And lavish giving and praise and glory known
He who does not love him acknowledges his virtue
He who knows no stars allots happiness to him
He guards against the days until I think he
Will seek the return of Ad and Jurhum
Confusion for this wind whatever it wants
Guidance for the shower whatever it intends
Did not the flood ask that tried to destroy us? 20
And the blunted sword informed it of you
And when the cloud meets you with its downpour
It meets the top of its fullness and nobility
It works on roads as soon as he manages a lance
It wets clothes as soon as blood wets them

It follows you and one shower follows the other
 From Syria as the student follows the teacher
 It visits her tomb which the horse visits
 Love burdens him whom she was burdened with
 When you are in front of the army its pride is 25
 For them in a rider with floating turban end
 Around him is a sea of armor undulating
 A mountain of horse goes with him raging
 All regions are equal to him until he seems
 To gather jumbled peaks and put them in order
 And every youthful warrior has on his brow
 The writing of blows spelled with spears
 The lion extends his arm in the chain mail
 And his eyes beneath the visor are serpent's
 As their races are their flags and their hair 30
 And what they wear and the poisoned weapons
 Length of battle has taught them and his glance
 Signals to them afar and they understand
 They respond with action but do not hear a sound
 He makes them hear a look and does not speak
 They avoid the right hand turn as if they
 Pitied Mayyafariqun and felt sympathy for it
 And if it gave them a push with its shoulders
 It'd know which of two walls is weak or ruin
 For every thin belly under every thin belly 35
 He pours a drink of blood and feeds with flesh
 The dress of rider above them is theirs in battle
 So every war horse has an armor that veils him
 This is not greed of soul faced by the lance
 Rather the firmest push to evil with evil
 Do Indian swords think your root is their root?
 But due to that you reprove what they fancy
 When we name you we imagine that our swords
 Due to their pride smile in their scabbards
 We do not see a king claim anything near him 40
 So he is happy and pities but they are witless
 You take from these souls every path
 Of life to give what you please and refuse
 No death except what your spear threatens
 No provision but what your right hand shares.

185 They set up for Saif al Daula a large tent at Mayya-
 fariqun and people spread out about it since the
 place was agreeable. But the wind blew furiously
 and the tent fell down and there was much talk about
 its collapse so he said. (445)

Is blame of any use with respect to the tent
 Could it cover one who guarded its fate?
 Was it above one who has Zuhail below him
 A place, by your life, that you ask for!

And why doesn't it rebuke him who blames it
 The stone of his seal ring isn't Yadbul
 Its sides were too narrow for your person
 Though cavalry pranced in a part of it
 It was too low when you were within it 5
 Though pliant lances were upright in it
 And how should it stand over a palm
 Whose fingers are as it were the sea?
 Would that you could part with your dignity
 And load your land with what you carry
 Mankind would become princes with that
 And you rule them with what you had left
 It sees the color of your light in its light
 As the sun's color does not wash away
 And that it had such tremendous height 10
 That tents were ashamed in comparison
 They should not find strange its fall
 For something can kill in the soul's joy
 And if men attained what it had attained
 Their legs would fail them due to your power
 And when you gave order for its pitching
 The news spread that you were not going
 Allah did not intend that it be plucked up
 But gave a hint what you should do
 He told them you are of His persuasion 15
 That you in His aid trailed the skirt
 Who are these strays and what their origins
 Who are these enviers with their gossip?
 They are seeking but what do they arrive at
 They are telling lies but who accepts them?
 They are longing for what they are coveting
 But your gracious bounty is beyond them
 The squadron as chain mail is his armor
 Even though the velvet is made of spears
 With them perdition surprises one army 20
 And the dust of them warns yet another army
 I have made provision for you in my heart
 For you do not make it with any hand
 Allah has indeed raised up a kingdom
 For it from you, O its sword, is the point
 And if that edge has been shaped before you
 Yet you before it were the one who cuts
 And if before you people now gone excelled
 Yet you were the first in generosity
 And how could you come short of the goal 25
 When your mother bore a cub from her lion?
 She had borne you indeed and men did say:
 Isn't the sun incapable of bearing?
 Woe to the faith of the servants of the stars
 And he who claims that they have reason
 They have known you but they have no minds
 They see you see them but they do not bow
 If you spend a night in your proper places
 The highest of you will spend it as lowest

Today after a while there will be good odors
The fire against the enemy with flames
But chaste women spend the night safe from them
And pilgrims find peace in their paths
Your enmity did not cease wherever there was
Prey, O lion who has been stirred up
I knew you and the ranks were set in order
But you had no care except for your sword
The ways of the sea are known from afar
When it is quiet but how when waves toss?
In a country where travel fatigue destroys
Though the crotches of runners are full
They seek the king of Rum himself there
The foreign troops are ransom for him
Have the Christians threatened us with agony
We are their stars which are a constellation
And with us the sword whose attack is true
When he arrives, and whose war is resolute
We seek protection for him from evil eyes
The uproar increases with prayers for him
The Domesticus pleases us without pleasure
Where the sword and ash wood judge
And if he advances we visit him at Semandu
And if he flees our bond is at the Khalij.

Another than I is deceived by most of these men
If they fight they run or talk they are brave
People of courage except when one tests them
In a test after the mistake they do not hold
Life and myself are nothing after they know
That life is foul in a way one doesn't want
Beauty of face is not in the curve of its nose
A proud nose cut off from honor is mangled
Shall I fling glory over my shoulder yet want it
Shall I leave help in a sheath and seek food?
The Mashrafi sword cannot cease to be honorable
A cure for every noble one or a disease
A rider of a horse that rushes, he steadies it
In glens, and blood on its side is a shower

They leave him but no anxiety is in his heart
 They anger him but no meanness is in his word
 All the princes defend themselves with an army
 This army is defended by the son of Abu Hija
 A first drink leads a troop to the farthest drink 10
 Speed on the bit and the reins held tight
 No town hinders his journey to another town
 Like death, no water and no feed is his
 Until he arrives at the walls of Kharshana
 Rum and crosses and churches sorrow at this
 The married as slaves and the babes dead
 The savings plunder and the harvest as fire
 All Marj is left to him setting up at Sarakha
 Pulpits, for his witnessing on Friday
 He feeds birds with them and long is their meal 15
 Until they almost fall upon the live ones
 And if the Disciples saw him they would set up
 Out of love of him a sect that would be legal
 The Domesticus blames his eyes, for black clouds
 Appear and they think of little rain clouds
 In them are armed men their weanlings, warriors
 As palm trunks on two year old horses
 Lucan is winnowed as dust in their nostrils
 And in their throats the swallowed Halys
 As if they met them to tread them as a highway 20
 And jousting opened bellies they widened
 They guide their eyes though the battle is dark
 A fire from the points and a candle of lances
 Before the heat of summer and before the cold
 The swift, lean ones overflow their souls
 When unbeliever calls to unbeliever the lance
 Intervenes so one rib parts from its sister
 The greatest of the sons of Phocas were shackled
 As he passed them and braver than he were dead
 And what escaped from the sword's edge flight 25
 Saved, but terror was in their hearts
 He took sanctuary for a time and he was insane
 And drank wine for a year but still was pale
 How many a patrician soul had been pledged
 To the sword secured while he abstained?
 That hindered walking for him if he tried it
 That drove off sleep whenever he lay down
 Death appears and won't stop waiting for orders
 Until he says: Back to me. Then it moves off
 Tell Domesticus; Those who surrendered to you 30
 Betrayed the Emir; he pays their deed
 You found them sleeping in that blood of yours
 As if your violent death distressed them
 Weaklings, the foes abstain from their likes
 Among foes, and if they want them they retreat
 Do not think those you captured have any breath
 For the jackal will eat only the carcasses
 Halloo on the banks of the wadi where the lions
 Come up, they pass one by one, not grouped

Every long bodied horse splits you with lances 35
 And a blow takes more of you than it leaves
 Indeed Allah sets the soldiers over against you
 So they are without stain when they return
 Every attack made on you after this will be his
 Every attacker is a follower of Saif al Daula
 The noble walk in footsteps not their own
 And you create what comes and are original
 Can any moment harm you when you are its knight?
 In it others are the weaklings and suckers
 He whose place is above the orbit of the sun 40
 Nothing can exalt or abase him
 Repeated attacks in mountains do not betray
 His blood, though friends and helpers yield
 Would that kings were donors according to worth
 Then there would be no temptations to filth
 You prize those who watch as you go to battle
 And strike with a lucid sword as they listen
 Indeed some allow you a fraud in a transaction
 If you make use of it without veracity
 Fate makes excuses but a sword is waiting 45
 And their lands are yours in summer and spring
 The mountains of the Nasrani cannot protect them
 Even if the sturdy goats become Christian
 I do not praise you for dread you are firm in
 Until I prove you and the hero fights
 Some think it bravery when one has recklessness
 Some think it cowardice if one shudders
 As for armor all of mankind can wear it
 But not everyone with claws is a lion.

188 He spoke and Saif al Daula was in pursuit of the
 Domesticus in the year 340. (458)

We visit homes whose situation we do not love
 We ask permission of no inhabitants here
 We lead there those who take us to the goal
 Upon them warriors who think well of them
 We cherish him called Abu Hasan al Hawa
 We accept Him called Allah and no other name
 And the Rum, these schismatics, know that we
 As we leave their land behind will return
 And when death lets down its veil in battle 5
 We take up our cause with blows and thrusts
 We go to it with a lover's aim whose rendezvous
 Is with us, and we say to swords: Let's go!
 Many a horse we transfixed with spears after
 They gathered from hither and yon against us
 They were beaten toward us with whips unwitting
 When they knew us they were whipped away
 Go past the villages and touch for us the army
 You arrive at what your right hand wants

In fact their blood is cooling above Lucan 10
 We are men who follow the cool with the hot
 And if you are Saif al Daula sharp against them
 Allow us to be a light lance before the cut
 We are those who do not short you with aid
 You are he who if alone would not need it
 He keeps you from death who wants glory in you
 And says: I am not content with a vile life.
 Except for you blood would not flow nor bounty
 Nor in the world or its people any meaning
 For fear is nothing except what the youth fears 15
 Safety is only what a hero knows to be safe.

189 He spoke and Saif al Daula had decided to attack
 Kharshana but the snow kept him from doing so. (460)

Critics of one who has a mole envy me
 Indeed my beautiful bedfellow is most noble
 He kept his hand from her dress though able
 He disobeyed her love's ghost though asleep
 When a lover recovers from burning love
 Within, a parting is in his nearness to her
 Since you feared shame in every solitude
 Why should a handsome woman beguile you?
 Illness stays with me till I am friends with it 5
 My doctor and nurse are bored at my bedside
 I passed by the camp of the beloved and my horse
 Whinnied but why does this place grieve horses?
 The roan is not ignorant of traces of the camp
 The girls poured camel's clabber for her there
 I long for something and it seems that nights
 Drive me from its essence and I drive
 And I am alone among friends in every land
 When the goal is great the helpers are few
 But a fast swimmer helps me from agony to agony 10
 Witnessing these things she has what it takes
 She bends toward the direction of the jousting
 As if her joints were bridled to the lance
 I bring my soul and the sword is in my hand to
 Watering without return to one of no courage
 But when the heart does not bear its hand
 In an affair, the arm will not bear it
 My two friends, I cannot see any but nonpoets
 Why do they make the claims and I the qasidas?
 Do not be surprised that the swords are many 15
 But yet Saif al Daula is today the only one
 He has a noble nature that is unsheathed in war
 Used to goodness and forgiveness sheathed
 And when I saw men who are short of his rank
 I was sure time has high standards for men
 Most worthy of the sword that strikes off heads
 And of rule that difficulties are easy for

No plagues Allah's lands that the Rum inhabit
 By this and those there who disown your glory
 You set cavalry on them until you leave them 20
 The eyelids beyond Franja are all ~~pl~~
 Dyed with blood the people are prostrate as if
 Though not praying they are yet in a mosque
 You overturn them and horses are their mountains
 You penetrate them and spears are straits
 You cut them apart and they dwell in the rocks
 Like the big snakes live in dusty hollows
 The high fortresses on the peaks appeared early
 And your horses were necklaces for their necks
 They stormed them at Lucan and drove them off 25
 To Hinzit, until Amid was shining with slaves
 They overwhelmed Safsaf with Sabur and it fell
 Their people tasted death and their stones
 The brave one went with them late in the valley
 Blessed servant not under any double veil
 The youth desires a wider land and time
 His hour and goal are too small for him
 He is a brother of war whose swords are not slow
 On their necks except if the Sihan is loy
 There only remained those he saved from the sword 30
 Red were their lips and high their breasts
 The patricians weep for them in the dark nights
 And they among us are thrown like pillows
 With these the days behave as with other people
 Misfortunes for some and benefits for others
 It shows the courage of nobility that you by them
 Are beloved in spite of the beating you gave
 That blood you made flow is an honor to you
 That heart you made fearful praises you
 And everyone sees the way of bravery and bounty 35
 But soul's nature is to have a leader
 You rob life from those who if you saved it
 Would greet the world with your immortality
 You are the sword of rule and Allah the striker
 You are religion's flag and Allah is the standard
 And you are Abu Hija ibn Hamdan O son of him
 The best of children and the father are alike
 The Hamdani are praised and praised are Harith
 And Harith is of Luqman who is guided
 All of these were the teeth of the Caliphate 40
 And the other kings of the land were excess
 I love you O sun of the times and its moon
 Even if Duha and the Forqad blame me for you
 And this is because virtue with you is shining
 And not because life with you is easy
 For a little love to the wise is health
 And such love for the ignorant is corruption.

190 And he spoke consoling Saif al Dawla for his lieu-

tenant Yamak who passed on in the month of Ramadan in
the year 340. (467)

May Allah not grieve the Emir for I
Must have a share in his condition
He who elated earth's people and wept in pain
Wept with those eyes and heart he rejoiced
As for me if the buried man was his friend
A friend of my friend is my heart's friend
Men have parted from their friends before us
Death's sickness has baffled every physician
We are preceded by a world so if its people lived 5
We would be unable to come or go here
The heir possesses with the hold of one bereft
The inheritance departs as youth goes
No virtue here for the brave or bounteous
No courage for youth without meeting death
The most complete mortal life for its owner is
The life of man broken off after graying
May Yamak remain in my heart as a passion
For every Turk whose root is transplanted
But not every white face has a blessing 10
Not every narrow eyelid has excellence
If sorrow for him displays itself in us
It also appears in the edge of every sword
And in every bow every day it vies in archery
And in every horse every day it is ridden
It was hard on him that he must leave his habit
That you call for a thing and he not answer
And when I looked at him standing with you
I saw one with the double mane of skill
Though he was a rich jewel yet you lost him 15
From a lavish hand generous in giving
As if death was hostile to every glorious one
If he asks no refuge from blame for glory
If it were not for time's gifts which unite us
We would forget and not feel its crimes
But refusal of gifts is best for him who takes
When one makes a gift without confederate
And he for whom Nizar became a servant
Can do without making slaves of foreigners
He satisfies pure love in slavery to him 20
And nearness to him in honor of kinship
May Saif al Daula be repaid in loss, for he is
The best reward from the best rewarder
Hero of cavalry whose chests are wet with gore
He jousts in the tight spots with violence
He loathes the broad tents in those wars of his
His only tent is the dust of battle
Felicity for us is duty if it is useful to you
In splitting hearts not in rending clothes
Many a sorrowing one has eyes that do not weep 25
And many with copious tears have no grief

Be consoled in the thought of your fathers for
 You wept but there were smiles soon after
 When a noble soul approaches its misfortune
 In fear, it turns and changes it to patience
 The one who finds affliction in his sighs has
 Peace in strength or peace in fatigue
 How many of your kin has eye not seen the face of
 But you did not flow in his track with tears
 Souls of the envious ransom you, for they
 Are tortured both present and absent
 In fatigue one envies the light of the sun
 And strives to attain it by imitation.

30

191 And he spoke praising Saif al Daula and commemorating
 the building of Marash in Muharram in the year 341.
 (472)

We ransom you among camps though you add agony
 For you are dawn to a sun and its setting
 How can we recognize traces of one who left us
 Neither heart nor mind to know the traces?
 We got down from the saddles and walked in honor
 Of one who had gone lest we trample there
 We blamed the high clouds for their acts there
 Turning from them, blaming times they appeared
 If one is with the world a long time it changes
 In his eyes, until he sees its faith as lies
 What is my pleasure in evenings and mornings
 Since that wind which blew does not return?
 There I think of a union I seem not to have won
 And a life which I seemed to pass in one jump
 And some charming eyes that are fatal to love
 When her smell spread to a shoik he was young
 Her skin is of pearl of which she has a nooklace
 I never saw a moon before her ringed by stars
 O desire how lasting and O me in this separation
 O tears what a flow O heart overwhelmed
 Parting that scatters sported with her and me
 Fed me on the journey what it fed the lizard
 But he whose ancestors were fierce lions
 Finds night as day and his food by force
 I do not worry after my attaining the heights
 Whether I inherit what I gain or earn it
 Because many a youth has taught himself glory
 As Saif al Daula learned by thrust and cut
 When the state is satisfied with him in trouble
 He suffices it and is sword, hand and heart
 Indian swords are feared and they are steel
 But how then if they are Nizari Arab?
 The lion's fangs are dreaded when he is alone
 But how when the lions are companions to him?

5

10

15

The surge of the sea is frightful in its place
 So how with him who covers lands as he flows?
 Knowing the secrets of religion and language
 He has thoughts which shame men and books
 You are blessed among showers so our skins seem 20
 To grow brocades and silks and fine cloth
 Among generous givers and strong pushers forward
 Those who tear off armor and scatter bones
 Your judgment for them is a joy to border people
 You are Allah's party so you are their party
 You have scared off fate for them and its worry
 If it doubts let it appeal in its court
 One day with horsemen you drive Rum from them
 Then by bounty you drive off want and drought
 Your invasions continue and the Domesticus flees 25
 His lieutenants dead and his wealth plundered
 Nearing Marash he thought in coming the far near
 He turned as you came and thought the near far
 Thus he abandons the enemy who hates the lances
 And he journeys whose booty is terror
 Did his stand at Lucan ward off for him
 Breasts of spears and strong lean horses?
 He went on after the lances tangled for a bit
 As one eyelid meets in dozing the other
 But he turned away as jousting became keen 30
 When his soul thought of it he felt his side
 He left the virgins, patricians and estates
 Wild-haired Nasrani, courtiers and crosses
 I know that each of us desires life for himself
 Coveting it and desiring it passionately
 A coward's love of self brings fear to him
 A brave man's self love brings him to battle
 The two provisions differ but the acts are one
 So it seems this is good and that a sin
 This shines as if the wall from its origin above 35
 Down to earth must split stars and dust
 The bustling winds are stopped by it in fear
 Birds are scared by it from gleaning grain
 Short haired horses pound over its mountains
 The north wind sends down cotton on its roads
 It suffices as wonder that men wonder that he
 Built Marash, fie on their notions, fie!
 And what is the difference between men and him if
 He fears the feared and finds the hard hard
 The caliphate readied him for work with the enemy 40
 Named him before the world the Keen Sword
 Spearheads did not scatter from him in pity
 Nor the enemy leave Syria for love of him
 Rather he exiled them from him without honor
 Noble in praise, never cursing nor cursed
 An army that splits every mountain as if it
 Were searing wind aimed at a tender stalk
 As if the stars of the night feared his attack
 And stretched over it a veil of his dust

Whoever contents blame and unbelief in a kingdom
 Yet he is pleased with nobility and the Lord.

192 And Saif al Daula made him a gift of a Rumi robe and
 a spear and a horse and with it a colt, and the colt
 was the best. (479)

A robe of nobility does not guard its beauty
 When it was given the giver was its wardrobe
 A weaver of Rum shows us their kings in it
 She reveals herself to us and her slaves
 Her design was not satisfied with knights alone
 She painted all things except her time
 She was not restrained in her powers of design
 But she could not make her creatures talk
 And the lance whose length seduces the knight 5
 He remembers repeated attacks and jousting
 Rudaini perfected it and almost its growth
 Fitted it with its iron foot and its point
 Noble's mother whose brother is less than father's
 He saw her beauty who admired him and he swore
 As she trots with him she reveals him and he her
 To a keen eye she is worse and he adorns her
 Where is she whose evil horsemen do not trust--
 Or my evil or gives her safety only to me?
 Where is she who shies not falsely at a lance 10
 As it lowers and my hand pulls on her reins?
 No praise by me if I do not see you in its place
 Or favor in you not seeing me in its place.

193 And he spoke praising Saif al Daula and complaining
 to him. (481)

O fevered is his heart for one of cold heart
 And one who in my body and state is sick
 Why should I hide a love that emaciates my flesh
 When nations claim the love of Saif al Daula?
 If a love has united us in his bright brow
 Would that by decree of love we might share
 I visited him and the Indian swords were sheathed
 I watched him and the swords were blood
 He was the handsomest creation of all by Allah 5
 And finest among the fine things was character
 Missing the enemy whom you pursue is a victory
 In part of it pain and in part graciousness
 Violent fear was lieutenant for you, and for you
 Terror did the work which warriors do not do
 You insisted on that for which there was no need
 That no land or mountain give cover to them

Each time you beat an army and it turns to flee
 Will ambition act for you in its pursuit?
 It is your duty to rout them in every battle 10
 But not to put shame on them when they run
 Or don't you see victory sweet except as a prize
 Where Indian steel and neck curls clasp?
 O most just of men except in dealing with me
 The feud concerns you who both plead and judge
 I take refuge in your glances that are trusted
 Not to think fat one whose fat is tumidity
 What use has a brother of the world in his eyes
 When light and dark are the same to him?
 I am he whose culture the blind look toward 15
 And my words have made the deaf to hear
 I sleep with quiet eyes apart from their roving
 But men wake to their course and fight for it
 My smile allows to many a fool his ignorance
 Until a ferocious paw and mouth hit him
 Whenever you see these fangs of the lion bared
 You must not think that the lion is smiling
 Many a heart whose master lusted for my blood
 I hit from a horse whose back is inviolate
 His back feet running as one and forefeet one 20
 His action is what hand and foot desire
 Many a keen sword I went with between armies
 Until I hit as death's waves pounded past
 Horsemen and the night and the desert know me
 The sword and the lance, paper and the pen
 I have been with the beasts in the desert alone
 When slopes and hills were amazed at me
 Those whose parting has been hard on us, O
 Our feeling for everything after you is empty
 What an honor for us in generosity from you 25
 If your concern would seek our concern
 If what those who envy us said pleased you
 Then no wound for me if pain delights you
 Between us if you respected it this knowledge
 Knowledge which for wise men means loyalty
 How often you sought faults in us and tired
 But Allah and nobility hated what you did
 How distant are blame and defect from my heights
 I am Thurya and they gray hair and age
 Would that the cloud whose lightning hits me 30
 Would send them to one who gets the shower
 I see that distance allots me all the journeys
 Which strong striding camels cannot reduce
 So I will leave Dumair on our right hand
 Grief comes to those to whom you said goodbye
 When you journey from people and they are able
 Not to let you go then it is they who depart
 Worst of lands is a place with no friend in it
 The worst man can earn is what dishonors him
 The worst game my hand has hunted is that where 35
 The gray falcon is equal to the vulture

By whatever words these rascals speak in verses
 They cannot be for you either Arab or Persian
 This is a reproach to you except that it is love
 Enclosed in pearls except they are words.

195 And when he had recited this qasida and the indigna-
 tion of the assembly had been calmed then a Nabataean
 who was in the assembly said to him: Permit me. I
 will have his blood so it will be a cheap death for
 this. And the Nabataean's name was al Samarri. And
 he was very proud of his writing. And about him Abu
 Tayyib spoke. (486)

O Samarri, laughing stock of all who know, do
 You understand? you the dullest of fools?
 Too small for praise so you said I will mock
 As if you were not too small for satire
 I didn't pay much attention to folly before you
 Nor did I test my sword on dust motes.

196 And he spoke also about what went between them con-
 cerning the complaints in the mim qasida. (486)

O let Saif al Daula not complain today
 Men ransom him, sharpest of striking swords
 What is mine when I stray and see before him
 Deserts I do not want and wastelands?
 Indeed he brought my council near to his heaven
 I spoke there with its moon and its stars
 Have pity on a beggar and be near to a suitor
 I had enough of gifts and you of giving
 Is this the reward for truth if I am truthful
 Or the reward for falsehood if I am false?
 If my sin was the worst of sins yet he who
 Comes repentant wipes out the worst of sins.

5

197 And he spoke excusing himself for what he said in
 the mim qasida. (487)

My tears respond and the caller is only the tell
 Crying; one answers before riders and camels
 I tried to stop it many times among my companions
 But it flowed between excuse and censure
 I grieve for distance and they wonder at my tears
 And so I was, I fretted only for the veil
 But there is no passion of a lover who has hope
 Of meeting, like that of a lover without hope

When you visit the people of the one you love 5
 They make no gift without sword and spear
 But flight is more deadly than my being watched
 I am drowning but my fear is not of wetness
 No thought in any of her people of what
 Troubles me, but my trouble will not change
 She conquers glances with a glance as queen
 By her two eyes; great empire is in her eyes
 Those bashful companions are imitating her
 In her walk, and so acquire beauty by art
 I have tasted need in my days and sweet in them 10
 But I stayed not with colocynth or honey
 Youth has surely shown me the spirit in my body
 Gray hair has shown me the soul in my change
 I came at night to the maid of a tribe returned
 With a friend neither continent nor amorous
 That night we put it off between our shoulders
 But it knew nothing of complaint or kisses
 So it went early and on it a bit of her perfume
 On its hanger and scabbard and sheath cover
 I earn recognition only by its striking 15
 Or by the tip of the shaft's breast
 The Emir presented it to me among his gifts
 Adorned it and dressed me in armored suit
 And from Ali ibn Abdullah is my knowledge of how
 To carry it; who is like Abdullah or like Ali?
 Giver of high breasted ones and short haired ones
 Long backs, bright cutting and toughly pliant
 Time and earth's face are too narrow for a king
 Who fills time and shore and mountain
 And we are in exultation and the Rum in fear 20
 The land is busy and the sea is ashamed
 From Taglib, conquerors of men, his origin comes
 From Adi, the enemies of cravens and misers
 But praise for Ibn Abu Hija that traces him to
 The ignorant time is true weakness and sophism
 Would that praises did justice to his virtues
 As well as Kulaib or people of early times
 Take what you see and leave what you hear of him
 The sun's rising dispenses with Zuhail for you
 You have found a range for speech that is wide 25
 And if you find a tongue to speak then speak
 The hero has the pride of humanity in him
 Best of swords in the hand of the best state
 Desires become prostrate before his perfection
 He doesn't say to a thing: Would it were mine.
 Observe when the two swords unite in the dust
 The difference in them in nature and action
 He is ready to be drawn against time's troubles
 Prepared as the leader of the brave knights
 The Arabs flee from him with the sand grouse
 The Rum flee from him with the partidge
 But there is no flight to mountains from lions
 Ostriches run with him to the goat's refuge

He crosses mountain passes to beyond Kharshana
 And retires from it but fear does not retire
 Because each time the virgins dream among them
 They will dream of captivity and camels
 If you want them to pay tax they are as lavish
 As you wish, for one-eye prefers the squints
 I spoke your glory in my verses that went forth 35
 O no pretence for what made no false claim
 To east and west there are people whom we love
 They study them and are the noblest envoys
 They inform them that I because of his noble acts
 Turn the vision between horsemen and servants
 O most graciously benevolent in my direction
 Thanks come from the gift and not from me
 My sleep was only on top of my knowledge
 That your thought cannot come into error
 Raise, get, cross, charge, rise, cheer, teach 40
 Add, speed, smile, please, come, laugh, give
 Perhaps your criticism is good in its result
 Often health of body comes with sickness
 I have not heard, nor yet others, of one in power
 Better shield against men of false speech
 Your clemency is clemency which is not put on
 Using eye shadow is not having fine eyes
 You are bounteous without reproach or weariness
 Without delay, or promises, or annoyance
 The words of men do not turn you from generosity 45
 Who can block the path of the raincloud?
 You are brave when the horse no longer treads
 On anything except armor and limbs and heads
 And some of the lances return the blows of others
 As if they argued with the souls of people
 You do not stop hitting your enemies on all sides
 Hastening aid while holding back with death.

198 When he recited this qasida they thought it very fine
 and he said. (495)

This verse indeed among verses is an angel
 It moves and is the sun and the world is sky
 May the Merciful be just between it and us
 Credit the words to me and the praise to you
 And when it passes the ears of the envious
 May it be among those that live and destroy.

199 And when he recited "Raise, get..." he saw them count-
 ing his words so he said. (495)

Raise, get, aid, guard, charge, rise, cheer, teach
 Add, speed, smile, grant, forgive, come, laugh, give.

200 And he saw that they thought the number of letters
was too much so he said. (495)

Live, stay, rise, rule, lead, give, bid, deny, plague,
trust; joy, get
Rage, shoot, hit, hold, war, take, scare; stop; feud,
set, turn, give
This prayer, when I am silent, I am content with
For I prayed Allah for you and he granted it.

201 And he was present at the assembly of Saif al Daula
in Shawwal in the year 341 and before him were
oranges and dates and he was testing horsemen so he
said to Ibn Jassh the Sheik al Missis: Don't sus-
pect this as a drink. So he said. (496)

A very long way from an intoxicating drink
Is the Indian orange or the fruit of the palm
On the contrary everything here is sweet
With you, from the smallest to the greatest
Both the field of eloquence and the rhymes
And the testing of the horsemen and horses.

202 And some of those present opposed al Mutanabbi in these verses and he said it was right for him to say: Far from you be the drink of drunkenness * From oranges or the date palm / In place of striving for the heights and lances * And the earning of praise and beautiful renown / And encouraging the thoughts of the scholars in research * And testing horsemen and horses. So Abu Tayyib said. (496)

I brought clear reasoning that is firm
My speech was according to my intention
But a word was opposed to this which was
Like a woman in respect to her husband
But this pearl is safe from the boring
And you are a sword safe from dullness
Nothing is sound to the understanding
When daylight has need of a guide.

203 And he spoke in Dhu Qad of this year and a messenger
from the king of Rum had arrived seeking a treaty.
And slaves rode in with some game. And they dis-
played the booty. They laid out a dead lioness and
with her three cubs alive presented it to him. (496)

You have given the suppliants their hopes
 And you have visited the enemy with death
 The Rum have come walking on foot to you
 Between the lions and their cubs
 When they see the lions held prisoner
 Where will they flee with their children?

204 And he spoke praising him and commemorating the letter
 of the king of Rum which had come to him. (497)

Your eyes are what the heart finds and found
 In love things don't stay for me yet last
 I was not one into whose heart love entered
 But he who sees your eyelid must be in love
 In joy and anger and nearness and distance
 The range of the eyes' tears glitters
 Sweetest love is what his lord suffers in union
 And flight, for he always hopes and fears
 Many a coquette's rage, intoxicated with youth, 5
 I interceded with due to my tender age
 Many a cool toothed sweet one bright in front
 I veiled my mouth from so he kissed my hair
 Many a gazelle long necked as your neck visited
 But I could not tell adorned from unadorned
 Not every one who loves is chaste, alone in my
 Purity, or pleases love as riders meet in war
 May Allah send rain to youth's days to rejoice in
 And work the working of old Babylonian wine
 When you wore the time with pleasure in it 10
 You were torn off but the dress was not torn
 I never saw the like of glances on parting day
 That searched out every murder full of pity
 They turn their eyes in perplexity, as if they
 Were setting their eyes upon Zibaq
 In the evening weeping prevents us from seeing
 And fear of parting from pleasure of farewell
 We say goodbye to them and separation is for us
 Ibn Hija's spear in the battalion's heart
 With deadly sharpness, even a web of David to it 15
 When it strikes is like a spider's web
 Guided to the kings of the armies as if it
 Selected the souls of warriors and chose them
 It strips off them every armor and shield
 And crosses every wall and ditch to them
 It is jealous of those between Lucan and Wasit
 Is set up between the Forat and Jiliq
 He brings it back crimson as if its sheath
 Wept blood in pity for the broken ones
 What I say cannot attain to him for he is brave 20
 When jousting is mentioned its name is his
 A striker whose fingers are in the sword's tip
 A player with delicacy is in the word's edges

One begs of him as one asks a shower for drops
 One blames him as one says to the sky; Gently!
 You are so good that you are good to all faiths
 And praise reaches you from every tongue
 The king of Rum sees your joy in generosity
 So he takes the position of a humble beggar
 He abandons the Samhari lances as one reduced 25
 To one more apt in jousting and more skillful
 He wrote from a distant land whose targets
 Are near to the fast horses round about you
 From thence his messenger traveled your route
 And he did not go except over split skulls
 When he approached, the light of flashing steel
 Glitteringly veiled for him his place
 He drew near walking on carpets but did not know
 Whether he went to a sea or climbed to a moon
 The enemy cannot turn you away from their blood 30
 With this sort of humility in affected words
 And when you wrote him before this you were
 Writing to him on the skull of a Domesticus
 So if you gave him some immunity, he asked for it
 If you gave the sword's edge, he was disgraced
 Why should the cutting steel hold back from them
 Prisoners as hostages or slaves as freedmen?
 They come to drink at its edges like sand grouse
 They pass before them line after line
 I reached with Saif al Daula's light such degree 35
 That I shine for those between east and west
 When he wants to play with the beard of a fool
 He shows him my dust and tells him truth
 The grief of the jealous is not what I want
 But yet he who opposes the sea will be drowned
 The Emir examines common men in his wisdom
 But closes his eyes at stupidity, knowingly
 But turning away the glance of the eye is no use
 When the glance of the eye cannot be silenced
 O sought after one whose proximity is denied 40
 O you who are forbid to those seeking support
 O cowardly knights who attend him take heart
 The bravest who quit him are afraid
 When the enemy runs into the trap of his glory
 His glory enraged is busy with his fortune
 Evident excellence would not conquer the enemy
 If there were no excess of joyful success.

205 He came to him at night as he was testing a weapon
 which was before him so he stopped and spoke. (504)

You told us of it but we did not see a weapon
 It was as if you painted the moment of attack
 When the helmets are arrayed over the armor
 And one who sees it longs for the battle

If you were to put out your fire you could read
 By this script in the darkest night
 If the Domesticus saw its double edge
 He would roll his eyes from trick to trick
 You have approved it indeed here on the carpet
 But it is better when girded on a man
 Yet in it and in him there is something lacking
 Unless you are their goal in perfection.

5

206 Some swords were presented to Saif al Daula and he
 found among them one which was not gilded so he com-
 manded that it be gilded and Abu Tayyib spoke. (505)

The best that steel colors itself with
 Is blood and its dye is anger
 Do not deform it with gold for
 The temper does not gather in it nor flow.

207 He spoke when a man who was an astrologer of the
 court sent to Saif al Daula some verses complaining
 in them of poverty and saying that he had seen them
 in sleep. (506)

We had heard of what you spoke in dreams
 So we got for you a thousand dinars in sleep
 But we woke up as you woke up without a thing
 So the gift is according to the saying
 Your eye was asleep as you were writing it
 And why were you sleeping at the pen?
 O one who complains when he sleeps of poverty
 Sleep cannot exist along with poverty
 Open your eyes and leave off speech in dreams
 Prefer the words of the sword of humanity
 Which no one can do without nor find any
 Substitute for nor guard when it strikes
 All his fathers were of noble race in the world
 But he is the noblest of the noble.

5

208 Saif al Daula ordered payment for some verses of Abu
 Dharr Sahl ibn Muhammad the Katib in this meter and
 form: O censurer stop blaming one whom * The length
 of his sickness and grief makes think / If you can
 advise him then cure his sickness * And help him by
 touching the matter that makes him thirsty / Until
 he says that you are the friend who * Brings hope
 to the violence of the times and to their looseness /
 Or not, so let it be for nothing can relieve him *
 Of the length of blame and you are not his advisor /

I myself am ransom for one whom I have wronged by
 my censure * Of his love, not fearing any of his
 guardians / The sun arises from the throne of his
 face * The moon rises from the expanse of his fore-
 head. (506)

Censure of censurers is perplexity to my heart
 Love of a darling is part of it in the core
 Reproof complains in its heat of the ones blamed
 And is frustrated when they oppose its pain
 By my heart O censurer the king is one for whom
 I grow angry at all men so as to content him
 If he did not possess the hearts yet he would
 Possess the times in heaven and his earth
 The sun is one who envies him, and victory one of 5
 His associates and the sword among his names
 Where else are three of his three good qualities
 His beauty, his ancestors and his sharpness?
 Ages have passed and not brought the like of him
 They come and are exhausted with watching him.

209 And Saif al Daula asked for more so he spoke. (508)

The heart O censurer knows most about its illness
 More worthy than you of its eyelid and tears
 By one I love I do not rebel against you in love
 Swearing by it and its beauty and elegance
 Shall I love him and love the rebuke against him?
 Indeed rebuke for him is from his enemies
 The gossips are surprised at reviling and say:
 Leave what we see you are too weak to hide
 A friend is no other than one I love for his soul 5
 And I see with an eye that sees not his equal
 He who aids the passionate one in his grief
 Is deserving of mercy's Lord and brotherhood
 Go slowly for censure is one of his sicknesses
 And be kindly for the ear is one of his parts
 Grant that censure in its pleasure is like sleep
 That is driven off by wakefulness and weeping
 Do not be excusing the lover in his passion
 So far as to find your heart in his heart
 For the stricken one is stained with his tears 10
 Like the corpse is sprinkled with his blood
 Love is like the beloved whose presence is sweet
 To one tested and receiving affliction
 If you said to one very sick: I am ransom
 For it, you would make him jealous of ransom
 May the Emir be protected by loving eyes, for he
 Is one who has no end of bravery and bounty
 That captures an armored warrior with a glance
 Intervenes between his heart and his glory

I have called on you for aid in trouble often 15
 He who heard was not called to his equal
 You came from above the times and from beneath
 Clashing, and from in front and from behind
 He belongs to the sword since he is named for it
 By its source and temper and trustiness
 The steel was shaped and it was of his nature
 And Ali was of the nature of his fathers.

210 A messenger from Saif al Daula came in haste and with
 him a paper on which were two verses about the con-
 cealing of a secret. He asked him to complete them.
 They were: Do you fear the divulging of the story
 by me? * But my joy is greater in hiding it / And
 if I did not keep it out of pity for you * I would
 look upon myself as you do. And they are from Abbas
 ibn al Ahnaf so Abu Tayyib spoke. (511)

Your pleasure is my pleasure as I have chosen it
 Your secret my secret so why reveal it?
 The manliness which guards is enough for you
 The love which takes heed makes you safe
 Your secret in my heart is like a corpse
 When the secret is resurrected it is not known
 It is as if my eyes transgressed with you
 And hid from the heart what they saw
 Telling secrets is a thing I do not recommend 5
 It is fraud and a noble man is no fraud
 Since I have the power over articulate speech
 I have even more power over not speaking
 I give my soul a free hand as I desire
 And I control it when the lance grows red
 Governments, O their sword, come by turns
 Yours the command O best of those who command
 Your messenger came to me in haste urgently
 So I answered him with my stored up verses
 And if it had been on a dark day of battle
 My sword would have met him and a red horse
 Destiny is never forgetful of its men
 For you are the eye by which it sees.

211 He spoke since Saif al Daula thought he was hesitant
 in his praise and had changed for the worse on that
 account. (512)

I see that this nearness is to be deviated from
 And the long peace is to be abbreviated
 Today you have abandoned me to shame and so
 I die once, but another time I come alive

I steal a glance from you and am ashamed
 And I rebuke the mare of my colt in secret
 I know that when I make excuse to you
 I must intend it as my excuse for excuse
 I would deny your splendid generosity 5
 If this were a matter for my choice
 But care prevents the verses except for a few
 And that prevents sleep except for dozing
 But I do not make my body sick over that
 And I do not light that fire in the heart
 Do not compel me to the calamities of the time
 To me it is evil and presses hard on me
 Mine were scattered movings leading to you
 They found no special home in the earth
 Many a rhyme when it had moved from my mouth 10
 Sprang over mountains and plunged across seas
 And if men were created from their times
 They would be the dark and you the light
 I feel for you that which no poet ever said
 And what no moon joyed in when it shone
 The most eager of those rejoicing in bounty
 Most wide ranging of those raiding a foe
 My ambition rises through you above the heroes
 And I do not count good fortune as luck
 And he who has had you as a sea O Ali 15
 Does not accept pearls unless they are huge.

212 Saif al Daula journeyed from Aleppo in the direction
 of Dyar Mudhar to stir up the bedouin there and he
 settled at Harran and took pledges from the Banu
 Uqail and Qushair and Ajalan and the plan for the
 campaign occurred to him there so he crossed the
 Forat to Duluk and Abu Tayyib spoke commemorating
 his route and his deeds in the last of Jumadi in the
 year 342. (514)

My nights after the girls' departure are fretful
 The long ones and the nights of lovers are long
 They show me a moon which I do not desire
 And they hide a moon which has no way to it
 And after the beloved I do not live consoled
 But yet I must bear the calamities
 Indeed one journey changed things between us
 But death after that trip is another trip
 If the perfume of the breeze was nearest to you 5
 May neither gardens nor south wind leave
 I have not choked on water except to remember
 Water where the clan of the beloved settled
 Flashing spear points defend it from above
 There is no approach to it for the thirsty
 Only in the wandering stars and the others
 Is there guide for my eyes to dawn's light

Does not the night look at your eyes in my face
 In which weakness and emaciation are manifest?
 I met the splendid dawn at Darb al Qolla 10
 My grief healed and night was a corpse there
 A day it was as if its beauty was a token
 You sent out, and the sun was your messenger
 No lover before Saif al Daula has had revenge
 Nor was vengeance taken on the darkness
 But he has brought all of those rare things
 To amaze with their rarity and to overcome
 He hits the Darb of the foe on short-hair horses
 And they do not know the arrows are horses
 Tail upraised they go with lances like scorpions 15
 They are happy beneath them and whinny
 This is only a suggestion which occurs to him
 At Harran, answered with spears and blades
 A hero, whenever he desires he executes his will
 With an army, heavy the tread of death in it
 And horses whose running thins them in every land
 After the late night stop there is no siesta
 Thus when they fan out from Rum Duluk and Sanja
 Pennants and squadrons scale every mountain
 Over some paths there elevated above the roads
 Among the gentlefolk their memory is obscure
 They do not realize until they see them raiding
 Hatefully, and yet their nature is handsome
 Like clouds they are raining iron upon them
 For every place is washed by the sword
 And women captives lament in Arqa at evening
 As if the bodices of the bereft were skirts
 They return and those Mauzar think it a retreat
 But not to them, rather the start of attack 25
 They plunge into the blood of all, wading as if
 They were surety for all blood not stepped in
 The flames accompany them on every roadway
 Where people are slain and homes in ruins
 They attack again and pass the blood of Malatia
 Malatia the mother bereft of children
 They double the part of Qobaqib which they fill
 And it seems as if its water were drunk up
 They frighten the Forat's heart with us as if
 The torrents fell on it because of the men
 Every swimmer drives back the waves there 30
 Equally, whether in depths or in the rain
 It seems as if the water flows over their bodies
 And their heads alone approach and the necks
 In the valleys of Hinzit and Somnin, for sword
 And lance head, substitutes for the dead
 They appear among them and are recognized
 Theirs a blaze unfading and leg markings
 The towering fortresses yield to our long attack
 And cast out to us their people and cease
 They stay a night at Hisn al Ran, hoofs in pain 35
 And all the proud weak beside the Emir

And in every soul except his there is weariness
 In every sword except him there is dullness
 And before Somaisat were gorges and deserts
 And unexplored ravines and valleys
 They overtook darkness near the land of Marash
 Great the ruin due to the Rum in the land
 And when they saw him alone before his army
 They knew all the world was redundant
 And that Khatti lances were too short for him 40
 That the Indian steel was dull against him
 He slakes them with his steed's breast and sword
 Hero whose courage is like bounteous gifts
 Generous in any circumstance with all his wealth
 But yet he is grudging to those in armor
 He takes leave of their dead to pursue fugitives
 With blows, so that round helmets are flat
 In the heart of Constantine there was admiration
 Though on his legs were his heavy chains
 Perhaps some day O Domesticus you will return 45
 Many a fugitive yet returns to him
 You escaped with one of your souls wounded
 And left behind another soul bleeding
 You yielded to the Khatti your son as you fled
 Can a friend rely on you in this world now?
 By your face which let you forget him for blood
 Your help for it was weeping and wailing
 Did the size and front of the army confuse you?
 Ali has a drink of armies and food
 When there is no prey for the lion except one 50
 He feeds no matter if you are an elephant
 When jousting does not engage you for its bravery
 Which is jousting, then blame cannot hold you
 And if the days had been watching that attack
 He would teach the days how to attack
 Kings who are not named sharp are your ransom
 For you are keen, polished on both edges
 And if there is one who is Saif al Daula for men
 Then among men there are also horns and drums
 I am the winner guided to what I speak of him 55
 When bombast is spoken before the speaking
 There is nothing to the words of men who doubt me
 By way of root, nor root to the speakers
 I am hated for what is owed in love to a hero
 I am calm but thoughts against me roam about
 You heal all but the pain of envy since that
 When it settles in a heart finds no changing
 Do not expect friendship from the envious one
 Even if you show it to him and make gifts
 Indeed we have met misfortunes by ourselves 60
 Many are the raids from them: small things
 Despicable to us that our bodies are attacked
 If only our honor and reason are safe
 O pride and honor of Taglib's clan of Wa'il
 You are the finest tribe of those who boast

It will grieve Ali that his enemy must die
 When ruin does not seize him with the lance
 He is the partner of death when souls are plunder
 So every death he does not cause is fraud
 And if victory were given by lot it would be
 For him who drinks death swiftly as he wins
 For him who scorns the world in such an hour
 Making the sword ring on the warrior's skull.

65

213 And he was slow in his praise and they chided him
 for that so he spoke excusing himself. (522)

By the least smile from you nature is revived
 And the limbs of the weak body strengthened
 Who can pay for your worth in its entirety
 Who can be content except he who is lenient?
 Indeed you accepted an easy excuse magnanimously
 My excuse is no matter beside it though plain
 It is impossible, if life is with you, that I see
 That your body be sick and my body healthy
 The neglecting of the verses is only because
 Praise falls short of description of the Emir.

214 He spoke and Saif al Daula was suffering from an ab-
 cess in the year 342. (523)

Does what frightens you know who is being hurt
 And why misfortune scales this heaven?
 Your body is above the aim of every disease
 The nearness of the least of it is a miracle
 Time has given caresses in love and passion
 But the beloved has suffered from the kiss
 How could the world make you sick in any way
 When you are doctor to the world's ills?
 And how could complaint afflict you with disease
 When you are saviour when affliction comes?
 You wearied of staying a day in which there was
 No real jousting and no blood flowing
 You are the king whose heart may become ill
 With his ambition which only war can heal
 What troubles you is your love of seeing those
 Whose dust is stirred up by their legs
 White legged they take the land of the enemy
 The nose and the sides are for the spear
 Loosen the reins of these who want to return
 For the distant which they seek is near
 Since it is an illness Hippocrates erred about
 The like was not known to his disciples
 By Saif al Daula's brightness my eyelids
 Are struck, under a sun which does not set

5

10

He wars on those who war and in him is my power
 He aims at attackers and by him I am hit
 The envious are excused in their greediness
 At my sight of him, even though they melt
 For I have certainly arrived at a place where
 The heart envies the apple of the eye. 15

215 Saif al Daula said that the envoy of the Greeks was
 happy at his sickness so Abu Tayyib spoke. (525)

You are ransomed by what this envoy rejoices in
 For you are healthy in that and not ailing
 The end of this is that you grieve the enemy
 And are firm against them and it ceases.

216 And he spoke about him when he complained about the
 abcess that troubled him. (525)

When Saif al Daula is sick the land is sick
 And what is above it, men and pure bounty
 How shall I make any use of sleep since
 In his sickness, sleep is illness to the eyes
 He heals you who heals his people by your bounty
 For you are the sea of which every sea is part.

217 He spoke when Saif al Daula regained his health.
 (526)

Glory and liberality recovered when you recovered
 Grief ceased from you and went to the enemy
 War has become healthy in your health and bounty
 Rejoices in it, and continuous showers pour
 Light which had departed has returned to the sun
 As if its loss were sickness to her body
 Your lightning gleams for me from royal lips
 Showers do not fall except where he smiles
 He is called a sword but it is no comparison 5
 How can a slave be compared to the master?
 The Arabs are unique in the world by his race
 Persians share with Arabs in his goodness
 And Allah is sincere with Islam through his help
 Even if the nations change by his graces
 I do not say that joy in health is yours alone
 When you are safe then all men become safe.

218 And he spoke praising him at the conclusion of the

month of Ramadan in 342. (527)

Fasting and breaking fast, holiday and the times
 Find their light in you as do the sun and moon
 His gifts seem the crescent moon turned to all
 Nor is any man favored by them beyond that
 The times with you are only an untouched garden
 O you whose character blossoms in this age
 Generosity does not end for you in these days
 May life not end for you in its years
 Your joy in their returning is unexcelled
 Joy of others in them, gray hair and old age.

219 He spoke and the river Quwaiq, a river near Aleppo,
 rose and surrounded the home of Saif al Daula. (527)

A sea that is less than he has veiled this sea
 Men disapprove it and pay homage to him
 O water why do you envy us his flowing
 Or do you want to appear his equal?
 Or do you seek the wealth of his right hand or
 Visit him to increase his courtiers' number?
 Or do you come as a moat for his fortress?
 But the lance and horse are enough for him
 O many a tide they have used for his boats 5
 Many a far meadow laid waste for his asses
 Many a mad one they drove off in his madness
 Many a drinker of a cup made scream often
 They have been changing his song to groans
 There is many a lion whose lair he enters
 Many a king whose forehead he tramples
 Leading them to sleepless eyelids
 Bring good news of his affairs in person
 Overcoming his opponents by his jousting
 Chaste as to what his garments keep secure 10
 Bright as to what is in his turban trusted
 He is sea, all the seas only fish to him
 He is a sun, the sun wishes she were him
 O sword if you claim to want to help him
 He answers before you finish the sin
 May his competency outlast his enemies
 Who guards himself and his religion from them.

220 He spoke praising him and honoring him on the feast
 of sacrifices in 342. (529)

For every man in his time something he prefers
 Jousting the enemy is Saif al Daula's skill
 And refuting rumors against him with the opposite
 And being happier than his enemies intended

Many intending to hinder him, hinder themselves
 Army leaders against him make gifts unguided
 Many a proud one not knowing Allah for a moment
 Saw his sword in his hand and converted
 He is the sea: dive there when it is quiet 5
 For pearls, but beware when the surf is up
 I have seen the sea overwhelm a young men
 But this that comes to a youth has an aim
 The kings of the earth remain submissive to him
 They go from his to ruin and meet him prone
 The sword and the spear revive his wealth
 But a smile and generosity kill what revives
 Astute, the vanguard of his eye suspects it
 His heart knows today what he sees tomorrow
 He gets his horsemen through difficult places 10
 Even if the sun's horn had water he'd get it
 On this basis a son of Domesticus called his day
 Dying, and the Domesticus called his birth
 You traveled to Jaihan from the land of Amid
 In three nights riding took you near and far
 He turned and gave you his son and his armies
 All, but he did not give it all for praise
 You towered between his vision and life
 He saw the sword of Allah in you unsheathed
 The blue of the lance sought no one but him 15
 But Constantine was the ransom for him
 He came to put on the monk's robe out of fear
 He had once put on the linked coat of mail
 A cane helped him walk penitent in a monastery
 Not content to go with a short haired sorrel
 And he did not repent till attacks left his face
 Wounded, and dust left his eyelids sick
 And if he could escape from Ali by being a monk
 Kings would be monks in pairs and singly
 And every man in the east and west after this 20
 Would have made a black hair robe for himself
 The feast whose festival you are honors you
 Rite for all who pray, sacrifice and rejoice
 May festivals remain as robes for you after this
 You return them worn and are given new ones
 This day among days is like you among men
 You are sole among them as it is unique
 It is chance if an eye is favored over its sister
 And when one day is lord over the others
 But O wonder of a ruler of whom you are the sword 25
 Does he not fear edges he has girded one?
 And he who makes a lion a hawk to hunt with
 The lion will hunt as other things he hunts
 I have known you as pure clemency in pure power
 If you wished your clemency could be steel
 But nothing kills free men like forgiving them
 But what free man of yours remembers gifts?
 When you honor a good man you possess him
 When you are good to the vile he rebels

Putting bounty in a sword's place for the high 30
 Harms like setting sword in bounty's place
 But you excel men in wisdom and knowledge
 As you excel them in state, soul and lineage
 What you do is too subtle for thinking
 One leaves the hid and takes the apparent
 End the envy of the jealous by flattening him
 You are the one who made them envious of me
 If your good idea of my hand strengthens my arm
 I will strike with sheathed blade to lop heads
 I am only a Samhari spear that you carry 35
 It adorns upright but strikes fear leveled
 Time is only one of the recounters of my beads
 When I speak a verse the age comes to sing it
 He runs with it who goes with ungirt loins
 He sings it who has never sung a song
 Pay me whenever you have my verses recited for
 By my verses the eulogists come repeatedly
 Disregard every voice except my voice for I
 Am the speaker told about and others echo
 I left night trips for one whose wealth is small 40
 And shod my horse with your gifts of pure gold
 I chained myself to your protection with love
 He who finds good a chain is chained indeed
 When a man inquires of his times for wealth and
 You are absent they make appointment with you.

221 There was a discussion between the Arabs and the
 Kurds concerning precedence so Saif al Daula said:
 What do you say about this? Give your opinion O
 Abu Tayyib. So he spoke. (535)

If you ask about the best of men
 Then the best of most of them is virtue
 Who are you among them O hero of Wa'il?
 The first of the jousts in battle
 The censurers of those who censure bounty
 Have excelled the tribes by your merit.

222 He spoke as the envoy of the King of Rum came to
 Saif al Daula in Sefer 343. (536)

Evil of this day has a name before its appearance
 But description is not true until vision tests
 The army herded together until it found no way
 Than to your carpet; I heard but did not see
 I was present to a select group but I was absent
 As to seeing, yet my eyes reported all of it
 Today the king of the Rum raises his vision
 Since your pardon to him is a victory for him

And if you answer anything to his letter 5
 There will be no end to the king's boasting
 His guards now think of resting for a moment
 From swords, but other peoples await them still
 You have exchanged them for other nations
 So people's heads may multiply and necks
 The comparison of your bounty to morning rain is
 Double bounty to your hand for rain has it too
 The sun receives its light from you upon rising
 Just as the moon receives its light from her.

223 And he spoke also after the entrance of the envoy of
 the Rum to him. (537)

Armor for the king of the Rum is this letter
 He defends himself with it and keeps you busy
 It is thick chain mail for him, and its words
 Fulsome praise for you and attainment
 How could this messenger get through his country
 When dust you stirred up hasn't settled?
 From which pools did he water his fine steeds?
 None of the springs are pure of bloody mix
 He comes to you, almost the head disowns neck 5
 And the muscles cut it off from fear
 He takes the stance of a soldier in his movement
 To you, except when the trembling distorts it
 Due to this they split his eyes and his vision
 Your name and the friend that does not cease
 He sees in you his bounty and bounty is desired
 He sees in that death and death is dreadful
 He kissed the sleeve, kissed the dust before it
 And all the warriors stand withdrawn
 Happiest of lovers, most successful of clients 10
 Is a hero who attains to kissing your sleeve
 A place his lips long for, but in front of it
 Breasts of war horses and flexible lances
 For nobility will not achieve what it desires
 Of you, yet a client is not rejected by you
 And greater ones than him in ambition, the enemy
 Has sent you and armies have waited for it
 He comes forward from among companions as envoy
 And returns to his companions critical
 The descendant of Rabia perplexes with a sword 15
 The Merciful formed it and glory polished it
 Those eyes cannot attain to the color of it
 Nor can those fingers test the edge of it
 When messengers see you their souls are shamed
 By it and what is brought with them
 The Rum beseech one whom all their gifts are from
 But they do not seek rancour from him
 And if fear of death and imprisonment drove them
 They act now as dead men and prisoners act

They fear you so that death is no gain over it 20
 And they come to you so chains add nothing
 I see all of those having royalty coming to you
 As if you were the sea and kings rivers
 When clouds give rain from themselves and you
 Their showers are dew and your dew showers
 Noble man, you give that on which you ride
 And war rages for you and you are attacker
 O give of the bounty to men whom you own
 But never give to men what I am speaker of
 Is not every day under my armpit a little poet 25
 A weakling he heartens me, short he stretches
 My tongue in speaking is silent to avoid him
 My heart in silence laughs jesting with him
 I tire of one who calls if you don't answer him
 I rage at one who offends if you aren't like
 Pride is not my habit with them except that I,
 I hate the fool and the sophist
 My greatest pride is that I can trust in you
 My greatest wealth is that I can hope in you
 Perhaps the noble Saif al Daula will permit 30
 Truth to come alive and vanity destroyed
 I aimed at his foes with my verse and his merit
 And they were raided who surrendered beaten
 Indeed they think that the stars are immortal but
 If they make war on him their bereaved wail
 Nor would the nearest be his if he wanted them
 Or the easiest if he wanted to get them
 All things distant for men are near for him
 When the herd of horses are veiled in dust
 His hand rules the east and west of the earth 35
 No time when it is not busy with bounty
 His thoughts follow the fugitives among men
 He who flees in war has ruin facing him
 And he who flees his good work envious of him
 Meets some of it wherever his gifts are sent
 Hero whose goodness though perfect he sees as not
 Perfect, until it is seen as all enveloping
 When the Arabs of the Arabs consider themselves
 Then you are their hero and chieftain king
 They submit to you in their souls and behave 40
 At your command, as tribes gather around you
 And all of the joints of the lance support it
 Yet only the point can pierce the knight
 I see you, if jousting did not win in battle for
 You, yielding as good qualities gain it
 He who does not learn submission to you himself
 Swords will let him learn from all men.

224 And Saif al Daula sent to Abu Tayyib the words of
 the poet: I will be thankful all my life if my
 death is an easy one * My hands are not greedy even

if they are strong / A youth does not keep his wealth
 from his friend * And does not show his complaint
 when his soles are worn out / He sees my need in the
 place where it is hidden * And it is a mote in his
 eye, until he comes out. And he asked him to add to
 them so he spoke and the messenger stood by. (542)

Ours a king whose purpose does not savor sleep
 Death to the living or life to the dead
 Too great for his eyes to be troubled by motes
 Whenever poverty shows itself to you it flees
 Allah reward Saif al Daula Hashimi for my sake
 For his great bounty is my sword and my state.

225 He spoke commemorating the attack on the Banu Kilab
 in the last of Jumadi 343. (543)

When others than you rule the wolves will play
 When others strike the sword will be dull
 You possess the souls of jinn and men completely
 How should the Kilab obtain their souls?
 They do not leave you in rebellion but rather
 The drinkers loathe the drink of death
 You sought them at the watering places until
 The cloud feared you were seeking it
 You spent the nights without sleep in them 5
 The marked Arab steeds trotted with you
 The army shakes its flanks around you
 Like the eagle ruffles its wings
 You inquired of the desert about them until
 Some responded to you and were an answer
 He fought apart from sacred things as they fled
 A bounty of your hand and near relationship
 And your care for them as descendants of Ma'ad
 And they were kindred and friends
 You desisted from the steel of the lance and 10
 Hill passes choked with their women on camels
 They let fall the babies on the camel rugs
 Male and female young of camels dropped
 And Amr became an emigrant on their right
 And Ka'ab was a bone joint on their left
 Abu Bakr became ashamed of its sons
 And Quariza and Thebab were blushing at them
 Whenever you follow the tracks of a people
 The skulls and the heads are left behind
 Women returned as if they partook of noble acts 15
 With their necklaces and charms upon them
 They were firm in thanks for what you gave
 But where is the reward for what he gives?
 Nor was their journey to you disgraceful
 Nor their protection by you any censure

Nor in their loss of the Banu Kilab
 Any forsaking when they saw your brightness
 How could your valor toward men have an end
 In subduing them if victory pains you?
 You are well disposed, O my lord, toward them 20
 But pity for culprits is blameworthy
 They are your servants wherever they are
 When you call to action they should answer
 They are real transgressors but they are not
 The first people to err and repent
 You are their life that becomes angry with them
 And abandonment of life for them is the end
 Your gifts are not unknown to the bedouin
 But yet many times the effect is hidden 25
 Many a sin has its birth from misguidance
 Often a sin is born from being too close
 The foolish people commit many a crime
 And penalty settles with those not criminal
 And if they fear Ali in their crimes
 He who fears must trust in Ali indeed
 And if Saif al Daula is not of Qais
 Yet from him is Qais' strength and garments
 And under his cloud they grow and flourish
 And in his times they increase and do well
 And under his banner they beat the enemy 30
 And fierce Arabs submit to them
 If another than the Emir made war on Kilab
 Mists would turn him from their suns
 He meets the enemy outside of the guard stones
 Where the ravens meet the wolves
 And horses that are fed on winds of the desert
 The mirage is enough water for them
 And yet their lord comes at night to them
 No use waiting or escaping
 Neither night can cover them nor yet the day 35
 Nor horses bear them away nor yet camels
 You charge upon them with a sea of iron
 That leaves behind them waves on the land
 He comes at evening and their carpets are silk
 And with the dawning their carpets are dust
 And that which he has in his hand is their spear
 As the coloring on his hands is theirs
 Sons of those your father killed in Nejd's land
 One remained and a short spear preserved him
 He forgave them and spared their little ones 40
 And on necks of most of them were necklaces
 And all of you did what his father did
 And all of your actions were just as amazing
 So may it be if one seeks the enemy
 Likewise may your joy be in attainment.

226 He spoke praising and commemorating the building of

the border fortress of Hadath and its besieging by
battalions of the Rum army in 343. (548)

In proportion to people of will firmness comes
Noble acts come in proportion to the generous
Littleness seems great to eyes of little people
Greatness seems small to eyes of the great
Saif al Daula loads the army with his ambition
And these vast forces are exhausted by him
He seeks from men what he is himself and that
Is something which even lions do not demand
The longest lived birds ransom his weapons 5
The young and old eagles of the desert
Being born with no claws does not worry them
For his swords and their hilts are created
Does al Hadath the red understand her color
Does she know which of two cupbearers is cloud?
Bright clouds poured out for her before his attack
When he approached her, skulls poured for her
He founded and raised her and spear struck spear
And waves of death pounded around her
There was a kind of insanity in it but it endured 10
And corpses of the dead were charms upon it
Outcasts of fate, it drove it but you returned it
To faith with Khatti lances in spite of fate
You make the nights lose all they have taken
When they take from you they are still debtors
When you intend a verb in the future tense
It is past before you put the lasm to it
How could Rum and Russians hope to destroy it
When such strokes were its base and supports?
They gave it a summons but the fates were judges 15
No wronged one died nor criminal lived
They came to you dragging their irons as if they
Traveled at night on horses without feet
When they flashed, their swords were not seen
For their armor and helmets were the same
A host, its push from eastern lands and west
And in the ears of Jawzi a humming from them
Every nation and tongue was gathered there
But only interpreters understood the speakers
By Allah it was a time when fire melted a coward 20
Nothing remained except the sword or the lion
What could not cut armor and spear was cut to bits
Those who did not strike fled from the knights
You stood and death was not doubtful for the firm
As if you were on an eyelid of dozing death
The heroes passed by you wounded and in flight
But your face was clear and your lips smiling
You exceeded the limit of bravery and reason
So people said: You know the unseen!
You pressed their two wings strong over the heart 25
Fin feathers died underneath and pinions

With a blow that hits skulls and victory not yet
 And goes to the breast as victory advanced
 You scorned the Rudaini so you threw them away
 So that the sword was abusing the spear
 He who seeks glorious victory indeed has
 His keys in the bright, light sword blades
 You scattered them over Uhaidab altogether
 As dirhams are scattered over the bride
 Your horses trample on the nests on the peaks 30
 And the carrion increases around the nests
 The nestlings of the eagle think you visit them
 With their mothers, but they are strong steeds
 When they slip you make them go on their bellies
 Like the snakes slither on the surface
 Is the Domesticus advancing every day
 With his neck blaming his face for progress?
 Does he deny a smell of lion until he tastes it?
 Even beasts know that odor of the lion
 Surely in his son, his brother-in-law and his son 35
 The fearful attack of the Emir pained him
 He went thanking friends for his escape from edge
 As their skulls and wrists kept them busy
 He knows the sound of the Mashrafi on them
 Though sound of sword is foreign speech
 Happy, not ignorantly, with what he gave you but
 Though plundered, he escaped you as spoiler
 You are not a king putting to flight your equal
 But rather monotheism pursuing the polytheists
 Adnan excels in this, not just Rabia 40
 The world is honored by it, not the capitals
 Yours the praise for a pearl whose word is mine
 For you are the giver and I the arranger
 Indeed your gift runs with me in the battle
 I cannot be criticized nor you be sorry
 On every flight thither with his legs
 When the war cries strike his ears
 O sword which has never been sheathed O
 No doubt in it nor safeguard against it
 Rejoice in striking skulls, glory and eminence 45
 Your devotees and Islam make you safe
 Why should not the Merciful guard your edges sure
 His splitting enemies' skulls by you goes on.

227 He spoke and knights of the border arrived and with
 them a messenger from the Emperor of Rum asking for
 a truce. (556)

Does a great king inspire fear thus in all men
 Does a cloud rain kings' messengers for him?
 And the world submit to him and given a seat
 While the days stand by as he desires?

When Saif al Daula visits the Rum in war
 A sally is enough for them if enough for him
 A youth, the times follow his steps among men
 At every moment the reins are in his hands
 The messengers sleep safe and content with him 5
 But eyelids of a messenger's lord do not sleep
 Guarding against unexpected barebacked horses
 Scornful of jousting having no bridle
 They turn there and their manes are reins
 Whipped on there, and the lash is a word
 And noble horses are of no use nor yet the lance
 If there is no nobility seated on nobleness
 How long do you deny messengers what they want
 As if they were blamed insofar as you give?
 If you are not given their fealty in submission 10
 Yet an enemy's refuge with bounty is fealty
 And indeed souls that come to you are protected
 And the blood that hopes in you is sacred
 When a king fears a king you stand by him
 They fear your sword and you agree to defend
 You make a rout for them with the light swords
 And a press about you with flattering letters
 The sweets of life confuse their hearts
 They choose part of life and this is death
 The worst of two swift deaths is a living 15
 That demeans one who chooses and overcomes
 So if there is peace that is without intercession
 Yet it is a humiliation for them and shame
 It's a favor to the border knights for their sake
 To do for them what they could hardly aim at
 The horsemen approach humbly and move forward
 If they weren't so fearful they'd be cowards
 Their horses were fed formerly in your courtyards
 They fed, horses swam in your bounty and they
 At your blessed appearance in every battle 20
 Prayers were sent by them and greeting
 And all men followed their leadership
 And you were leader of people of noble acts
 Many an answer to the letters you dispatched
 And its title for readers was in dust clouds
 The desert too narrow for it before its unfolding
 Nor was the seal of it broken in the desert
 The letters of its alphabet of men were three
 Fine steeds and supple lances and swords
 O the war which you followed now has its moment 25
 For sheathing blade or loosing saddle girth
 And if life of the lance is lengthened by truce
 Yet those that live with you have only a year
 You still destroy the dark ones and they are many
 And destroy with them armies and they are huge
 When the roamers return you return to their land
 And there are necks for the sword and skulls
 They raise their children for you till you attack
 Daughters high breasted and boys full grown

The rivals contend with you until they reach
The utmost goal, and you run and they stand
For there is no light in the sun when you shine
No fullness in the moon when you are full.

228 He spoke commemorating the campaign of Saif al Daula against the Banu Uqail and Qushair and Ajalan and Kilab when they made trouble in the sphere of his influence and he turned toward them and he destroyed some of them and pardoned others who were favorable to him according to their assistance and opposition. to meeting him in 344. (559)

I remember what happened between Udhaib and Baraq
At jousting our lances and running the winners
And companies of people who sacrificed their prey
With fragments they broke on the hair parting
And nights when we slept with Thewiyya beneath
As if its dust were amber on the cushions
When the pebbles of this land's dust are taken
To beauties elsewhere they are set in collars
A pretty girl poured for me there the Qutrobbal
A shine of faith over her deceitful promise
Drowsiness in the eyes and sunlight in a glance
Sickness for the body and musk to the nose
A slender youth, every wise one loves his soul
Chastely and every lewd one loves his body
Well educated, each time he touches lute strings
He makes each ear deaf except for them
He tells of the times of Ad and of his own times
His curls on a boy's adolescent cheeks
There is no beauty of face to distinguish a youth
When it is not in his acts and character
There is no city for man except what suits him
Nor family closeness without friends
It is a gift, the call of the beloved and of love
If not, the words of a hypocrite are not hid
By my truth! to whom did Uqail yield in death
To the enemy's joy and the creator's wrath?
They enticed Ali with that which exhausts men
And spread out the ruin of the vast army
They did not lay a hand on anything not sharp
Nor bear a head to anything not splitting
They had gone on had they met no one to stop them
They had fled had they met no one to pursue
When he dressed Ka'ab with garments they rebelled
He tore each robe to shreds with the spears
And when he poured showers which they rejected
He poured other things with other flashes
Want did not hurt from hand of forbiddar as much
As privation from the hand of the giver

He came with them in the midst of dust and lances 20
 Their hooves filled the hollows of their eyes
 Dark ones, dried sweat on their girths as jewels
 And they were belts on their middles
 Would that Abu Hija could see beyond Tadmor
 The long lances on the broad plains
 And Ali's driving those of Ma'ad and other
 Tribes, who never turned a neck to pursuer
 Qushair and Ajalon were of them in small number
 Like r's in a word the speaker mispronounces
 The women leave them alone without separation 25
 And they leave the women alone without divorce
 He brightens what is between warrior and them
 With thrusts, his heat diverts every lover
 He comes to the women when blood no longer flies
 From horses, except on breasts of the girls
 On every desert whose land rejects mankind
 Are women in red garments and on red camels
 And there are the squadrons of Saif of Rabia
 Pebbles cry at them with the cry of cranes
 Far the spear points from the shaft ends 30
 Thick under the helmet the collar dust
 His bounty forbids and enriches them with booty
 And they desire only the defense of their own
 The Arab imagines the assault as easy
 The desert reminds him of the awning shade
 You remind them of water at the time when
 The Samawa of Kalb in all its pride was dusty
 They were afraid of kings coming to the desert
 And that green scum would grow in water holes
 They roused you, guided in a desert by its stars 35
 And they made tents of the ostrich nests
 More patient of its water than the lizards
 More used than they to heat on the eyes
 There was grumbling among camels as you left them
 With tail hair cut and with silent uvula
 They did not avert your horses from rest after run
 But desert keeps them from crossing high peaks
 They did not prevent spearheads with their hearts
 From being stuck in earth, or from Rumi hearts
 Did they not note deformity that deforms an enemy 40
 And makes lions' paws into little rabbits' paws?
 They had seen him with others and many a time
 He showed rebels in war struck down as rebels
 His horses are used to not eating dry barley
 When skulls did not raise the feed bag's mouth
 Nor do they relish the pools except their waters
 Have some blood, like myrtle under roses
 The tribe of Numair was more guided than they
 They drove howdahed women like a wild ass herd
 They prepared lances of submission and jousted 45
 An army with them to turn the edge of force
 I see none shoot better than he unless by trick
 Nor luckier with the enemy unless deceiving

The huge catapults are overwhelmed by his hand
 Lightly, and it wears out the crossbow's bow.

229 And he spoke describing his attack on these tribes.
 (568)

The long lances that you thrust are too short
 And your drops in bounty and battle are oceans
 There is clemency in you when a felon does evil
 He thinks it generosity but it is scorn
 And firmness to the townspeople and the bedouin
 With a restraint that Nizar is not used to
 They sniff the smell of men like beasts
 And reject it and timidity disgraces them
 They are not led at any time by others than you 5
 And they know neither yielding nor submission
 Because the lead rope galls their necks
 And that bridle pulls at their cheeks
 Restraint in regard to them gave desires to Amr
 And your patience and reserve made them hasty
 And the messages and complaints changed them
 And the preparations and raids amazed them
 And horses for whom bridles are too weak
 And horsemen for whom the camp is too narrow
 And they are in expectation of their death 10
 Souls on whose death you are consulting
 You were the sword whose hilt was for them
 And your edge and point against the enemy
 And its double edge was lodged at Badia
 And Hiyar was behind its hilt
 And the Banu Kilab were in Ka'ab's territory
 And they were afraid to be where they were
 They met the power of their lord with submission
 And traveled to the Banu Ka'ab who came also
 He busies them with the high meadows 15
 Lean, they are not skinny nor yet fat
 They climb to Salamyā in a dust cloud, but for
 Landmarks you'd not know what is beneath
 What a dust! the eagles struggle with it
 As if the air were sandy desert of dirt
 Jousting goes between pairs of cheating horses
 As if death were rushing between them
 Urgency presses them to the fighting
 Their only defense there is flight
 They run, their legs trying to get ahead of 20
 Their heads, as the distress of their legs
 He drives them with every lean high horse
 To his knights on the choice horses
 And every hard one quivers along its length
 As its double edge the blood flows freely
 It leaves everything coiled around it
 And its breast has a hole for its fox

When the day drives the light from them
 Double night darkens: dust and evening
 If the wing of darkness sweeps away from them
 The day and the Mashrafi flash out
 Behind them the flocks weep: the wailing 25
 Crumbling or bleating or bellowing
 Covering the desert with dust until
 Nursing dams and pregnant are excited
 They passed by Joba and there a cloak of dust
 Enveloped both of the armies
 They came to a sandy plain without saddles
 And the turbans and the veils fell off
 And they had loaded up the young fillies behind
 But very little girls were trampled down
 And Awaira was drunk dry so there was no Awaira 30
 And so with Nahya and Buaiyatha and Jivar
 And they sought no refuge except in Tadmor
 But Tadmor, like its name, was ruin for them
 Then intended to change the plan there
 But dawn came for them with a plan unchanging
 And an army, everywhere they return in the land
 And it came as they came to it confounded
 He surrounded them nobly, no reprisal for him
 No blood money to be paid and no excuse
 His swords dripped the blood of the enemy 35
 All blood they dripped free of revenge
 They were lions that did not have strength
 To fly, and they had no wings
 When they escaped the spears, the desert
 Reached them with spears of thirst
 They see death before and behind
 And they choose, and death is necessary
 When he goes through Samawa there is no guide
 Their dead to his eyes are sign posts
 But if he did not stay a remnant would not live 40
 In the past for those who remain as a lesson
 If their lord does not take care of them
 Who will be for them and be jealous for them?
 He differs from them in character
 But ancestry unites him and them
 And he turned then to Arak and Urdhi
 And the people of the Raqqas had a visit
 The Banu Numair took fright at the Forat
 And the roar that they roared was a bellow
 And they were a herd on the Khabur prostrate 45
 Drunk with the drink that was for others
 They did not send out their flocks in the morning
 Nor was fire lit in their night
 Wary of the youth who was discontent with them
 But there was no need of caution for them
 Their chiefs spent the night traveling to him
 And found him indulgent to what they asked
 He granted them life by returning their swords
 And their heads were his though bare

They were among those who swore fealty to him 50
 Of noblest stock and reckoned the finest
 Thus he made a dawn of quiet in the region
 But no stagnation in the sea of giving
 And his memory beamed through all the land
 And the wine was sent round with song
 The tribes fell down prostrate to him
 And the spears and the blades praised him
 As if the rays of the sun's center were in him
 And in our eyes there was a defeat by him
 He who seeks jousting is Ali alone 55
 The horses are Allah's and lances thirsty
 Men see him wherever Ka'ab saw him
 In the land where his attack had no veil
 He was in the midst of the waste land every day
 Seeking jousting not waiting
 His horses whinny in response to each other
 It is the horses' nature to be secret
 Banu Ka'ab and the impression you had on them
 Is a hand that only a bracelet bloodies 60
 For them by his strokes there is pain and loss
 For them in his glory there is honor
 Theirs is a right by sharing with you in Nizar
 Closer sharing in a root of neighborhood
 Mayhap their sons and your sons can be soldiers
 The first five year olds are foals
 You are best of those who if thwarted destroy
 Most forgiving to those whose end is ruin
 You are strongest of those whom victory spurs
 Most forbearing of those power makes clement
 And there is no blame in the attack of the lord 65
 Nor shame in the submission of the servant.

230 And he spoke bidding him farewell as he was going on
 a journey to his estate. (576)

O archer who hits the heart that is aimed at
 You increase wealth with feathers on arrows
 I travel to his estate in his garments
 On his horse from his palace with his sword
 What a shower of swords and spears he gives me
 And Rumi slaves in the shower of his cloud
 A youth who gives regions of flocks and villages
 And his horsemen and fine things in them
 And he makes his gifts from whatever I fancy 5
 As payment when I fancy some of his words
 May the sun which is in his heaven not cease
 With the rising sun under his veil
 May the moon not cease to grow with his face
 Amazed at their waning and at his fullness.

231 And he spoke at Aleppo offering him condolences for
his younger sister and consoling him with his re-
maining elder sister in the month of Ramadan in the
year 344. (577)

If patience in one who has great grief is virtue
You are most virtuous, strong and glorious
O you are superior to the weakness of a lover
Are above one who strengthens you with reason
And by your words he is guided to strengthen you
Speaking what you spoke to him beforehand
You have experienced things both bitter and sweet
And trod paths of days rough and smooth
You struggled with time in knowledge, and there 5
Were no strange words and no new actions
I find grief in you patient and rational but
I see it in the world as fear and ignorance
You had a friend that brought it on and whenever
The root is fine it is a friend's root
Loyalty is a thing you have grown up in, and yet
Your family is still familiar with loyalty
The good of tears as a help is in the tear
That patience sends forth and lets flow
Where is the one who had pity for you in war 10
When the steel was thought hateful and rang?
Where is one you left behind at dawn when you
Met the Rum and skulls were split by swords?
The fates allotted to you two persons unfairly
But they made your share just in the end
And when you measure what they took with what
They left, it rejoices your heart and consoles
It is certain that your happiness is richer and
It is clear that your fortune is higher
By my life! you have kept the fates busy 15
With the enemy, so why should they seek work?
How many you have revived with swords from time
As prisoners, and from poverty with gifts?
It counts this help against itself when
It attacks secretly thinking to take revenge
Its thoughts deceive for you afflict it
And you remain in peace not put to the test
Indeed the enemy may attack you as they will
They will not harm the shadow of your person 20
And you were charged with the happiness of some
Of the souls of the enemy and you got them all
The lances struck your lance and then
Your lance left spearmen unarmed
If you gave any an advantage by surprise
Jousting, you give it to horsemen eye to eye
And you would reveal that cry of grief in blows
As long as it shows anguish and glory
The go-between for death leaves her no refusal
Even if she is called the bereft one

And when she did not find men good enough 25
 She of the harem chose death as husband
 The pleasure of life is precious to the soul
 And more tempting and sweeter than disgust
 When an old man says: Alas! It's not that life
 Bores him, but rather weakness wearies him
 The instrument of life is health and youth
 And when they turn from a man, he turns away
 The world is always taking back gifts it gave
 O would that its bounty were more stingy
 Ending the kind of happiness that inherits grief 30
 And friends that betray love of friends
 For it is in love with betrayal, and not with
 Keeping contracts nor completing embraces
 All tears flow from this and for this
 And opening a pair of hands empty of this
 It is feminine nature in her and I do not know
 Whether man should name her woman or not
 O king of men who scatters life and death
 Among them, and glory and humiliation
 Allah girded you with rule whose sword you are 35
 A blade which is the place of generosity
 By that the clients grow rich with lavish gifts
 By that the enemy are ruined by destruction
 And when it shakes for bounty it is sea
 And when it shakes for battle it is an edge
 And when the earth is dark it is the sun
 And when the earth is barren it is rain
 He is the striker of battalions as jousting
 Grows, and thrusts increase and increase
 O you victor of the mind which cannot attain to 40
 Description, you tire my thoughts so go slowly
 He who gives a comparison for you will weaken it
 And he who travels your road will go astray
 For whenever a client wishes immortality for you
 He says: Live ever or till one sees your like.

232 He spoke commemorating the expedition of Saif al
 Daula to the border fort of al Hadath when he learned
 that the Rum had besieged it in Jumadi first in the
 year 344. (583)

This is eminence so let him aspire who aspires
 Thus and so, or otherwise he is not so
 Nobility that strikes the stars with its horns
 And strength that makes the mountains shake
 The state of our enemies is tremendous but Saif
 Al Daula son of swords has greater state
 Each time they hasten with warnings on the way
 His horses are faster than they in haste
 They come to them as despoilers of the earth who 5
 Bear nothing but steel and heroes

Hidden is their color for the dust has woven
 Upon them veils and saddle cloths
 Their breasts and the spears have sworn
 To plunge into terrors that are before him
 And to go where the lance cannot find an orbit
 And where the stallion cannot roam
 I do not blame softness' son, the king of Rum
 Even if what he desires is impossible
 Does the building between his ears shake him 10
 When the builder sought the sky and got it?
 Each time he aimed to ring it, the fort too big
 Covered his forehead and the back
 He gathered the Rum and the Slavs and Bulgars
 Against it, and you gathered death
 You encountered them there with brown lances
 As the thirsty one comes to the pool
 They aimed to destroy its wall but built it
 They came to shorten but made it longer
 They wanted to drag up engines of war until 15
 They left them there as it stormed on them
 Many an affair that befalls you is not praised
 As action, but one praises the result of it
 And many a bow rebounded as you were shot at
 By reversing the shots with arrows from you
 They took the roads to cut off messengers there
 But their interception was a message
 They were a sea that was possessed of waves
 But it became for your sea the mirage
 They did not run to avoid fighting you but yet 20
 The battle that sufficed you was fought
 And that which cut the necks with blows
 From your hand, has cut off their hope
 And the resoluteness which was strong of old
 Teaches the resolute in this present fear
 They descend among the dead and recognize them
 Lamenting maternal and paternal uncles
 The wind bears among them the hair of skulls
 And scatters among them the limbs
 They are warned by bodies lest they stay there 25
 And they see in all the bones a lesson
 They see the thrusts reaching the heart
 Before they see the lances on horseback
 And when the horsemen begin your thrusting
 They see the arms extending the spear
 Fear spreads from the right hand to the right
 And lengthens as from left to left
 Terror consumes their hands so they do not know
 Whether they carry swords or manacles
 And their faces show fear inspired by your face 30
 They leave their fineness and beauty to it
 And the flashing eyes speak of the thought
 Of the end, and the will to retreat
 And whenever a coward is left alone in the land
 He seeks the jousting and attack by himself

They swear not to see you except in heart
 So long as eyes can deceive men
 What eye can turn to you and meet you squarely?
 Many a glance looks at you and turns back
 The cursed ones do not doubt your taking an army 35
 But why do they send an army as a gift?
 What is wrong with one who sets a trap on earth
 In the hope he can catch the crescent moon?
 Before what is above the passes and al Udhab
 And the river there are experienced fighters
 He forced destiny and the kings for its sake
 He built it as beauty spot on time's cheek
 And it walked with the proud steps of a bride
 And was praised as coquette with the times 40
 He defended it with each driving spear point
 From the tyranny of the times and from fear
 And edges that distinguish forbidden and lawful
 And they destroy the blood on the legal
 On the battalions of the courageous blacks
 That have devoured souls and flocks
 And indeed the souls of men are beastly
 They devour each other openly and secretly
 He who is able to seize anything by conquest
 And by force does not take it by begging
 Every youth at time of need has the feeling 45
 That he is the fiercest of the lions.

233 Saif al Daula recited as an example the words of al Nabigha: There is no fault in them except that their swords * Have become dull from striking the battalions / They are chosen from the times of Halima's battle * For the day when is tested all that can be tested. So Abu Tayyib spoke in response to him. (589)

I know you have honored the poets with gifts
 Both those born recently and those of old
 And you have given those who remain huge wealth
 And given those who have gone huge honor
 I have heard you reciting the verses of Ziyad
 A recitation as noble as his poem
 And I do not deny his rank but yet
 I emulate for that reason his long dead bones.

234 And he spoke in the year 321 at Ra'is al Ain when Saif al Daula attacked Amr ibn Habas of the Banu Asad and Banu Thubba but he did not recite it when he met him but included them with his other eulogies. (589)

Memories of passions and the grazing gazelles
 Have drawn my death before the time of my death
 Traces of the camp, longings within me increase
 In this place just as the increase of blame
 It is as if every cloud that hovers here
 Weeps with the eyes of Urwa ibn Hizam
 Long time I have sucked the drops of its breast
 Here, and it ruined my speech with blame
 You were laughing at the departure shamelessly 5
 And dragging skirts of youth and ill nature
 That is no howdah on the camels but they
 Only are life that departs with a farewell
 Would he who created distance would make pebbles
 In their hoof pads my knuckles and bones
 Staring at each other we pour water from eyes
 Being careful of the guards on the hill
 Our souls are flowing and we live after them
 After they have dripped over the feet
 If like our patience on the day they flowed 10
 At parting they'd have been no cloudburst
 They have left me no master except grief
 And trot of fast camel like a male ostrich
 Refusal of bounty of her back makes it for me
 Forbidden as love object except going to you
 You are the rare one in this time with a family
 Whose noble acts were born without limit
 You often gave lavish gifts and did not stop
 Being distinguished with virtues and graces
 You make small each great thing and make great 15
 With: It's as if... and, You have youth's years.
 You swaggered in garments of praise for indeed
 Poverty of praise is the extreme of poverty
 It is bad for you to be seen with sword in battle
 The scimitar does not create with a scimitar
 If there was one like you he is dead or divinity
 And in that case I am free of Islam
 A king, his days are proud of his position
 So that they boast about him to other days
 You think he plundered mankind of their minds 20
 Due to his mind for they are without reason
 When you put it to a test his will is revealed
 As one uniting the twisting and untwisting
 And when you ask his fingers about his gifts
 He is not pleased at the world's true verdict
 Go slowly, O by Allah what has the lance done
 To Amr Haba and Thubba the sorry?
 When the spear passed judgment against them
 It was unjust and they were unjust to justice
 You left them outside their houses as if 25
 Their heads were angry with their bodies
 The stony men were on a land of blood
 With helmets as stars in a heaven of dust
 And the armor of every Abu So-and-so by name
 Changed, and its master became Abu Orphan

My idea of the Emir's battles and his horsemen is
 In dust they are pursuers of the pursued
 The blessing of Allah upon you without farewell
 May he water your father's land with clouds
 And dress you in clothes of reverence from him 30
 And show you your brother's way as great chief
 For he strikes the lands of the enemy by himself
 With an army's vanguard like a pounding sea
 A people in whom death rides horseback
 And sees in you the patience of virtue in war
 By Allah! men would not know except for you
 What bounty is or the striking off of heads.

235 And he spoke also at the time of his withdrawal from
 the lands of Rum in the year 345. (594)

Experience comes before the bravery of the brave
 It is first and that has the second place
 And when they are united in a manly soul
 They attain every place in the heights
 Sometimes the youth jousts with his equal
 By skill before heroes thrusting at each other
 Except for intellect the meanest lion would be
 Nearer to nobility than a man is
 Nor would souls compete for excellence, nor hands 5
 Of the warrior manage the manly lances
 But for one named for his swords and sharpness
 When drawn they might be as sheathes
 He plunged into death with them so it was unknown
 If it was from scorn or forgetfulness
 He strove but people of the time and people of
 All time came short of his goal on high
 They took seats in the palaces but with him
 The saddle was the seat for the youth
 They fancied that battle is a game, but jousting 10
 In battle is other than jousting in a field
 Every foal of a winner that alters by its beauty
 The heart of its master away from grief
 When alone they are bound by habits of battle
 Calling to them makes unnecessary a halter
 In a huge army whose dust veils the eyes
 It is as if they looked with their ears
 The conqueror attacks a distant land with them 15
 Every distant place comes close to him
 It is as if their back legs were in Manbij dust
 As they drive their front legs at Hisn al Ran
 Until they cross the Arsanas swimming
 Scattering there the turbans of the horsemen
 Galloping as it were against knives of the cold
 That left the stallions as it were geldings
 And the water is pure between two dust clouds
 Dividing itself and meeting itself there

The Emir galloped in and bubbles were like silver 20
 And he turned the bridle and it was red gold
 He twisted ropes from women's braids over it
 And built boats for it of the crosses
 He filled it with runners without any legs
 Barren of belly and black in color
 They bring what the horsemen have taken prisoner
 As it were crouching deer, women underneath
 A river accustomed to protect its people
 From its fate and blows and misfortunes
 So you left it and when it protected mankind 25
 It feared you and excepted the Banu Hamdan
 Destroying with all of the bright swords
 Armored treaties for possessors of crowns
 Seeming poor for all the wealth of their realms
 Humble in spite of their high rank
 They take a noon nap in the shade of a fine horse
 Death to the ostrich and a lasso to the wolf
 The sword submits to your sword by force
 And your religion puts down other religions
 On the mountain passes it was shame to retreat 30
 And progress was forbidden as impossible
 And roads were narrow with passage of lances
 Unbelievers gather against the faithful
 They looked at the steel staffs as if they
 Were coming up between shoulders of eagles
 And at the horsemen whose souls death inspired
 As if they were no more among the animals
 You did not stop hitting them reaching the peaks
 Harshly as if the swords were double there
 Especially the skulls and faces as if 35
 Their bodies came to you in safety
 So they threw away what they shot with and turned
 Treading on every twanging bow
 Rain from the clouds covered them with waves
 Of straight shafts, Indian steel and points
 Forbidden what they hoped, and attained by them
 The hope of him who returned disappointed
 When lances engross the heart of the revenger
 His heart is busy apart from his brothers
 Alas the swords hinder the return 40
 Many are the corpses and few are the captives
 And the well trained one commands fate for them
 They submit to him obeying the Merciful
 Their hair made black the trees of the mountains
 It was as if there were ravens flying there
 And the crimson blood flowed over the leaves
 So it seemed oranges were on the branches
 Swords are with those whose hearts are like
 The hearts of steeds when they meet the ranks
 You find a sword for all the daring of its edge 45
 Is like a coward in the hands of a coward
 The Arabs have raised in you a pillar and it is
 For heads of kings a torch to light fires

The geneology of their boasting is traced to you
 The lineage of their ancestors to Adnan
 O one who destroys whom he wishes with his sword
 I am one of the corpses made by your goodness
 And when I see you my vision is perplexed by you
 When I praise you my tongue is dazed by you.

236 And he spoke also praising him and commemorating the
 deception of the Patricius in his oath by the head
 of the king when he met Saif al Daula in the pass in
 the year 345. (599)

Outcome of an oath in outcome of battle is ruth
 Can such a vow increase your courage?
 And such an oath since you have promised it
 That shows you, as to reliability, are rotten?
 Ibn Shamushqiq vowed to the youth and broke faith
 With him, in a handclasp forgetting his word
 An agent is one who wants to do without an oath
 He is swift in the acting and generous
 All swords when the striking continues long 5
 Weaken, except Saif al Daula the impetuous
 If a horse grows weary so it cannot carry him
 His spirit would carry him to his enemy
 Where are patricians and the vows they swore
 By hair of the king and the lies they lied?
 He avoided the lies in their words with his swords
 They are tongues and chiefs are their mouths
 Eloquent informers to their skulls about him
 What they do not know and what they do
 He brings back horses shoeless having been led 10
 From places like Wabar and its people Iram
 Like Tell Batriq whose inhabitants were tricked
 Because your home was Ras Qansarin and Ajam
 They thought you were a torch in Aleppo and if
 You went forth without it darkness returned
 They think of the sun except they are ignorant
 They leave death but they are imagining
 Scarcely has Saruj finished opening its eyes
 When your army presses between their eyelids
 And the dust seizes upon Harran and their Baqa 15
 The sun grows pale at times and veils itself
 Clouds come to Hisn al Ran tenaciously
 No stinginess in them unless of revenge
 An army, as if you are in a land conquering it
 But earth has no front nor the army
 When landmarks disappear from that, flags appear
 When flags go from this, landmarks reappear
 The horses find the hot star heats their halters
 And brands the bridge of the nose
 Until they come to drink at Sumnin's pools 20
 Bits in their mouths sizzle in water

And so they burst on Hinzit town with fury
 Grazing edges on fertile hair growth
 And they leave not a mole there that has sight
 Under the dust, nor a hawk that has feet
 Nor any lion with a mane for armor
 Nor any wild cow with handmaidens like her
 The caves of the earth and the valleys and hills
 Cast them on the edges of their scimitars
 They crossed the Arsanas that was defensive 25
 How defend those who defend not themselves?
 Nor did the stream's current bar you from them
 Nor high peaks turn you back from them
 You struck it with breasts of horses carrying
 Men, when they met you head-on they yielded
 Waves dashed against the chests of their horses
 Like a herd rushes on in a fury
 You crossed it going ahead of them to the land
 Its dwellers bones and its homes in flames
 In their hands flames which were worshipped 30
 Before the Magi, kept burning for this day
 Indian irons, if you diminish the band, small
 In their edge, and if you enlarge great
 You shared Tell Batrik with them and theirs were
 Its men, and yours children and women
 The boats cross with the foam of waves on them
 On their upper lips the slaver from its spray
 Black, horsemen riding in their bellies
 Tollsme, but pain is with people not them
 They are horses which you trick the enemy with 35
 Not having their nature nor character
 Product of your thought in the moment of haste
 Like a word's letters hearer's wit grasps
 They long for the morning at Darba in the uproar
 To see you, but will not see you being blind
 You push them back with an army and you its blaze
 And its spears are the forelock on its face
 And the firmest thing for them was their bodies
 Falling about you, but the souls fled away
 And the Awji horses fill the roads behind them 40
 And Mashrafi swords fill day above them
 And when the blows agree on the forward motion
 The heads come to clash in the air
 Son of Shamushqiq betrayed his oath and did not
 Return, but stayed afar while it was mocked
 Nor did the distant one have hope for his heart
 What was near robbed and plundered the soul
 Long armor repels the spears of knights from him
 A rain of lances on the folds is continuous
 The spears write on it but do not pierce it 45
 As if every point on it were a pen
 May shower not water the trees that hide him
 Taken from him, vultures will veil his shape
 He plays with his lords without honor you aim at,
 Wine drinking and lute playing and singing,

Having girded on the sword over thanks of Allah
 No favor can exceed in sharpness these two
 The blood of the Rum is cast on you in submission
 If you call without a blow, blood will reply
 Battle outdistances every misfortune for them 50
 Neither death nor old age can overwhelm them
 It banishes the sleep of Ali from his eyes
 Soul reveals soul in other ways than dreams
 Enduring king, guided one, witness to his
 Uprightness and guidance in Arabs and non-Arabs
 The son of the dust cloud in Nejd for its knights
 By his sword Kufa and Mecca were his
 Do not seek generosity after his appearance
 A noble act in their gift is a sealed hand
 Do not bother with poems after this poet of his 55
 Speech is corrupt when the deaf praise.

237 And he spoke also and it is said that he intended him
by it. (606)

I leave you and if there was anything with you
 Of evil before parting, afterwards it is a gift
 When I remember what was between me and you
 I comfort my heart for the pain that I find.

238 And he spoke mourning the death of the elder sister
of Saif al Daula and comforting him for her. She
died at Mayyafariqun. (607)

O sister brother's best O daughter father's best
 You have in them a name of most noble lineage
 Your rank is too glorious to name it in an elegy
 He who describes you names you among Arabs
 Sad feelings do not yet possess his tongue nor
 Tears, but they are in the grip of feelings
 You betrayed O death as many as you destroyed in
 One you hit; as many criers as you quieted 5
 How many of her brothers you escorted in attacks
 How many you asked not stingy or balky!
 He crossed the Jezireh until the news came to me
 I was frightened at it hoping it was false
 Until his trust did not leave me hope
 I choked with a tear as he nearly choked me
 Their tongues stumbled with it in his mouth
 Couriers on the road and pens in the letters
 As if for Falata the parade had never been full
 At Dyar Bekr, nor honors given nor gifts made
 Nor ever gave back life after transferal 10
 Nor asked for help with alas! or pity!

I know Iraq has long nights since the death news
 But how are nights for the hero at Aleppo?
 He suspects my heart is not consumed by flames
 And the tears of my eyes are not flowing
 No! by the respectability that was well kept
 By holiness of glory, purpose and culture
 One who went left none to inherit her character
 Even if her hand left inheritance of wealth
 Her care was for height and glory from her youth 15
 But her friends' care was in play and games
 They knew when she greeted, beauty in her smile
 But for Allah, none knew her cool teeth
 Her hair was happiness to grains of musk
 But grief to hearts of helmet and cap
 When it looks beyond her at head wearing helmet
 It sees the veil on top of it at the peak
 If she was created feminine yet she was created
 Noble, not feminine in mind or wit
 And if she was of Taglib with many ancestors 20
 Yet in wine is truth not found in grapes
 Would that the suns that appear were absent
 And the absent sun were not absent
 Would that the eye day brings back with it was
 Ransom for that gone not to return
 None who wear ruby necklaces are her like
 And none who gird on the Indian scimitar
 I cannot think of the beauty of her good deeds
 Unweeping; there is no love without cause
 She had before her face every kind of veil but 25
 You were not content O earth with these veils
 You have not seen the eye of man reach her
 Did you envy the stars' eyes for her?
 And did you hear my greeting come to her?
 I was afar and did not greet her near by
 How should news reach our dead one buried
 If it fell short of our living absent?
 O patient best, visit the best of hearts in her
 Say to its owner: O most useful of clouds,
 And most noble of men not second to any 30
 In generosity except your excellent fathers
 Their times shared with you these two souls
 Their pearls live, one ransomed, one gone on
 One gone returned in search of one left behind
 For we forget, but the days are searching
 Only the shortest of times was between them
 The time between approach and watering
 Your Lord reward you with pardon for your grief
 For grief of all who grieve is akin to anger
 You are a people whose souls are generous 35
 In what they give and do not give as plunder
 You have settled among all the kings of men
 In place of brown lance among other weapons
 May the nights not endow you for their hands
 When they strike, break hard wood with soft

May they not aid the enemy you have conquered
 For they hunt the falcon with the buzzard
 If they rejoice with a love they also afflict
 Wonderful that they bring both states!
 And often a man reckons he has attained his goal 40
 And it surprises with a thing not reckoned
 And no one obtains from them his needs
 Nor is a goal attained without another goal
 Men disagree until there is no agreement for them
 Except in ruin and there is discord in ruin
 It is said the soul of man is saved by peace
 It is said it shares with man's body in loss
 He who reflects on the world and its dear hearts
 Thought holds him between languor and toil.

239 And he spoke also praising him after he had sent to
 him gifts time after time when he was in Iraq in
 Shawwal in the year 351. (631)

What is wrong O messenger if all of us are sick?
 I am in love and your heart is anxious
 Each time the one I sent there returns
 He envies me and is false in what he said
 Her eyes have corrupted the faith between us
 And the minds are betrayed by their hearts
 You suffer what I suffered of the pain of love
 For her, and love is where emaciation is
 And when love mingles with a passionate heart 5
 Then that is a hint to every eye
 Our provision from your face's beauty lasts
 But beauty of face is a changing thing
 Embrace us, we embrace you in this world
 For permanent things are few in it
 One knows from looking that dwellers long
 Like the loaded camels are longing
 If you see me grow darker after the whiteness
 It is praise for the flexible lance
 A maid has been with me in the waste land 10
 Change is custom of colors with her
 The bride's tent veils you from her but yet
 From her for you there is a kiss of crimson
 Like her you change my color and make me ill
 And beauty increases your brilliance
 We knew but yet we have asked about Nejd:
 Is our road long or is it far away?
 And many were the longing questions
 And many were the consoling replies
 We did not stay in one place however good 15
 Nor was any motion possible for a place
 Each time a meadow spread wide for us we said:
 We go to Aleppo and you are the road

In you is pasture for our horses and camels
 And toward that our trotting and galloping
 And many there are who are called Emir
 But the Emir who is there is hope
 He whom I parted from east and west
 But his gifts were before me without end
 And then censure of bounty comes to listen 20
 Censor and censured are ransom for him
 Favor gives life to many a servant by his
 Hand, when others are struck dead by it
 The winning horses and the long lances
 Long coats of mail and polished swords
 And every time it dawned in the enemy's camp
 He said: It is a downpour and a torrent.
 They take it by surprise tearing off the woven 25
 Chain mail, like feathers are plucked
 His horsemen chase horsemen like beasts hunted
 And a small band takes prisoner an army
 And when war appears fear asserts
 By his eyes that he is terrible
 And when he is well then the times are healthy
 And when he is sick the times are ailing
 And when his face is absent from a place
 There is by his fame a fine show
 There is none beside you O Ali as a hero 30
 Whose sword unsheathes before his honor
 How could Iraq and Egypt not be safe
 If your raids and horsemen are before them?
 If you turned away from the path of the enemy
 Lote tree and palm would tie up their horses.
 And know, by one whose pride is rejected by him,
 In themselves the meanness and lowness
 You all your life long have battled the Rum
 When is the promise of a return fulfilled?
 Aside from the Rum behind your back are Rum 35
 And to which of the two sides can you turn?
 All their men sit on the sidelines of your run
 And their swords and spears stand beside them
 None of those with him pass around death
 As they pass around cool wine for him
 I no longer enjoy what was your generosity
 And my times, as I see you, are miserly
 Distance from you embitters but bounty is near
 The pasture rich and my body emaciated
 If I found a house not in my world 40
 And gifts came to me you would be giver
 One of my slaves if you live is a thousand Kafurs
 Your bounty all of Nile and Upper Egypt
 If mishap avoids you then I do not worry
 About any whom discord and danger doom.

240 And Saif al Daula wrote to him inviting him and he

answered by this qasida in Shawwal in the year 353.
(618)

I understood a letter that does good to letters
 Homage is due the command of the Arabs' Emir
 Submissive to him and made merry by him
 Even if the act comes short of what is duty
 Nothing hinders me except fear of the slanderer
 For the ways of slanderers are falsehood
 Exaggerations of people and their belittling
 And their trotting between us and ambling
 And indeed his ears were aiding them 5
 But his heart and mind were aiding me
 But I did not tell the moon: You are silver.
 Nor did I tell the sun: You are gold.
 But the distance of a friend was shaken by it
 And slowness to anger was enraged by it
 And no country has held me after you
 Nor substituted a lord for my favor's lord
 He who rides the ox after the horse
 Denies the cloven hoof and the dew lap
 Nor have I matched any kings of the land, 10
 Not to mention some, with the one in Aleppo
 And if I were to name them by his name
 He would be steel and they wood
 Is his comparison to mind or generosity
 Or to bravery or to culture?
 The name is blessed, the surname is brilliant
 Generous the soul, noble the ancestry
 Brother of war, he is served by ones he captures
 As his slaves, and he bestows what he plunders
 And when he gathers wealth, he gathers it 15
 As a youth who is unhappy unless he gives it
 Indeed I follow him with memories of him
 Blessings of Allah and showers of clouds
 My praises on him for his benefits
 And I am near to him whether far or near
 And if his showers have departed from me
 Yet most of their pools have water yet
 O sword of your Lord and not of his creatures
 O owner of nobility not a sword ridge
 Most spirited of those possessed of spirit 20
 Wisest of those possessed of rank in rank
 The best jousting of those who grip the Khattī
 Strongest of those who strike with sword
 With these words I call you O border people
 So be present with skulls under the blade
 For they despaired of the pleasure of life
 The eyes are perplexed and the heart flutters
 Words of the enemy confused the Domesticus:
 Truly Ali is seriously ailing.
 But his horsemen know that he indeed
 If he wishes will ride even if sick

He brings them from the breadth of his lands
 With their long manes and short tail bones
 The peaks are hid by his armies
 And they appear small if they are not hid
 The wind cannot pass through the space
 Without being scratched by a spear or stopped
 And they drown their cities with the armies
 And you find their voices faint in the uproar
 And are they ugly in seeking their battle!
 And are they ugly in leaving what they seek!
 You were afar and fought them in a battle
 You came and fought them in their flight
 They found in him an honor when he came
 You were the excuse for it when he fled
 You outdistanced them with their death
 The advantage of rescue comes before ruin
 They boasted to their Creator being prostrate
 And if not rescued they bowed to the cross
 How many you protected from death with death
 And snatched from agony with agony
 And they thought that he if he returned
 Would bring with him the crowned king
 They both asked help from him whom they served
 And according to them he had been crucified
 They push away from themselves what he obtained
 O men what a wonder is this!
 I see the Muslims along with the polytheists
 Now in weakness and now in terror
 And you with Allah are on the mountain side
 With little sleep and much of toil
 And you by yourself served the unity in Him
 And the world submitted to father and son
 Would that your swords to the jealous ones
 Would bring grief when you appear to them
 And would that your pains were on his body
 And would that you repaid with hate and love
 For if you repaid what I would receive from you
 Weakest joy will be strongest reason.

30

35

40

MISRIYYAT

241 And Abu Tayyib spoke praising Kafur al Ikshid in the
latter part of Jumada in the year 346. (623)

Enough illness for you to see death a cure
And enough deaths that they are desired
You wanted that when you wanted to see
A friend weak or an enemy concealed
If you are content to live with baseness
Then don't get ready a Yemeni sword
And do not extend the long lance for war
And don't make friends with a fine horse
Modesty is no use to lions that are hungry 5
They are not feared except famished
I loved you my heart before you loved one afar
But he was a betrayer so you be faithful
I know parting makes you complain after him
But you are not my heart if I see you fret
Tears of the eye are betrayers to their lord
If the channels are the tracks of deceivers
If bounty does not make provision free of evil
Praise is not earned nor does wealth stay 10
There is nature in the soul that shows the man
Was it bounty came or pretended bounty?
Diminish the longing, O heart, for often
I see you loving one who does not respond
I was created sociable, if I return to youth
I leave my gray hair with hurt heart weeping
But in Fustat there is a sea that I will visit
With my life, my counsel, my love and rhymes
And horses between whose ears we leveled spears
They spent night easily following lance heads 15
Running on feet each time they touched stones
They printed unshod the falcon's breast
They look with trusty dark eyes into the gloom
Seeing distant shapes as they are
They prick up the ears to the faint whispers
Thinking of secret talk they are called by
They pull the dawn riders by the reins
As if on their necks they were snakes
Firmly a body in the saddle moves as if riding
Beside, and heart in body moves apace 20
Seeking Kafur and leaving all others
He who seeks a sea thinks little of creeks
Bringing us to a man, eye's apple of the times
Leaving the white behind and the corners

We cross over from them as patrons to one whom
 We know from his gifts and favors to them
 A young man, we came on backs of our ancestors
 To his times, only in hopes of a meeting
 His rank rises above the aid of nobility
 So he performs no acts but virgin ones
 He erases hate in competitors by his mildness
 If they don't perish in it he kills enemies
 Father of Musk, this is the face I longed for
 This is the moment I was hoping for
 I faced deserts and high mountains before him
 And passed at noonday leaving water thirsty
 Father of all scent not Father of Musk alone
 And of all clouds--not merely morning clouds
 Everyone who is honored is shown by some trait
 But the Merciful united in you all traits
 Though a man acquires eminence by bounty
 You give high rank with your generosity
 It is not much that a man visits you on foot
 And returns as viceroy of the two Iraqs
 Indeed you give an army which has come raiding
 To one of your clients who has come begging
 You scorn the world with scorn of experience
 That sees all but yourself dying in it
 You are not one who reached kingship by wishing
 But rather by days that whitened the forelock
 Your enemies see them as turmoils in the land
 But you see them as stairways to the sky
 For them you have worn the turbid dust as if
 You saw unclearly to see the air clear
 You led to them all short haired swimmers
 Bringing you angry, returning you content
 Drawn out, sharp ones submit to you at command
 Transgress if you make exception or oppose
 Twenty cubit brown ones you approve at watering
 Approve your aiming at horsemen they drink
 Detachments that do not cease to trample tribes
 Of the earth having trampled desert for them
 With them you raided kings' camps so their hoofs
 Managed their skulls and their valleys
 You are one who covers the spear points first
 And refuses to cover the spear points second
 When Indian equalizes a pair of dreadful swords
 Your sword in a hand makes an end of equality
 Words of Sem to his offspring if he saw you:
 Sons' soul and wealth ransoms brother's son.
 His Lord brought the protector to the far limit
 His soul not content except with the goal
 One called and he answered, to glory and rank
 While other men rejected the soul's call
 He has come to be above the world that sees him
 Afar even if nobility makes him come close.

242 And he came to him after he recited this qasida and
the black smiled on him and arose and he was wear-
ing sandals and Abu Tayyib saw the cracks in his feet
so he spoke mocking him. (629)

I'd show you content if the soul could be secret
But I am not content with myself nor with you
Are lying, perjury, betrayal and sordidness
Due? Are you close to me as person or shame?
You think my smiles are in hope and emulation
But I am only making fun of these hopes
I am amazed at your legs in sandals since I
Saw you with sandals when you were barefoot
And you didn't know whether your color was black 5
Due to stupidity, or if it was pure white
The cut of your ankles in the split reminds me
And you walk in oily clothes yet naked
Except for men's favor I would praise you
By what I have mocked you with in secret
And you would be happy with what I recited
Even if the recitation was wild satire
And if you had nothing good for your ransom
I'd ransom with my sight of delightful lips
The likes of you are brought from distant lands 10
To make the women in mourning clothes laugh.

243 And Kafur built a palace at the Iza grand mosque on
the lake and moved in and asked Abu Tayyib to com-
memorate it. (631)

But congratulation is what belongs to an equal
And to those who approach from afar
And I for you am not a limb that rejoices
With the rejoicing of other limbs
I think that palaces are small for you even if
The bricks of this building were stars
And even if that which murmurs in its waters
Were made of the brightest silver
You have the highest rank you could wish for 5
Whether the place is in earth or heaven
And yours are the men and the land and
What pastures between green and dusty
And yours groves of fine horses and what
They bear in the way of long brown lances
Truly the noble Father Musk can boast
Of what he has built in the heights
And of the battles which ended for him
When he had no palace but the battlefield
And of what his bright swords imprint 10
Upon the skulls of the enemy
And of musk that he is named for that is not
Musk, but rather the perfume of praise

Not by the city built in the country
 Nor what attracts the hearts of women
 A house is dwelt in when you live in it by
 Something finer than it: light and rank
 He loosed in the flowers their perfumes
 The growths of nobility and grace
 He shamed the sun each time a sun appeared 15
 With a sun of shining blackness
 It is in your clothes that glory dwells
 With a brightness easy for every beam
 Only courage wears it and brilliance of soul
 It is the best of brilliant cloaks
 Noble you are in bravery and sagacity
 Of visage and power in faithfulness
 Who would not exchange the white king's color
 For color of the protector and his face?
 The sons of war see them with the eyes 20
 That see him with them on battle's morning
 O hope of the eyes in all of the earth
 There is no one else that I see as my hope
 Indeed the desert exhausted my horse before
 We trusted with food and water for me
 Cast on me whatever you wish for me for I
 Am lion-hearted with bloody face
 My heart belongs to kings even though
 My tongue seems to be a poet's.

244 He spoke praising Kafur the Ikshid in Shawwal 346
 with this pearl which is one of his finest poems.
 (633)

Who are the wild helpers in the dress of bedouins
 Red the ornaments and camels and clothing?
 If you ask by way of complaint at their goodness
 Who harms you with wakefulness and punishment?
 May the cows not repay me with languor afterward
 They repaid my tears that flowed with flowing
 Travelers, perhaps their howdahs as they go
 Will be protected among jousting and striking
 Perhaps hoofs of the camels will tread with them 5
 On the blood spilled by the horsemen
 Many visits I made you slyly among fearful Arabs
 And they slept through the visit of a wolf
 I visited them and the black of night interceded
 I turned away as the white dawn incited me
 They met the wild animals grazing where they live
 They differ in taking down and putting up tents
 Their neighbors and the worst of neighbors to them
 And their masters and the worst of masters
 The heart of every beloved is in their tents 10
 The flocks of all who take flocks by plunder

Faces of town women thought beautiful are not
 Like the faces of the plump bedouins
 The beauty of the town woman is contrived by deceit
 Among bedouin beauty is not artificial
 Where are the equals of the goats of Iram?
 There are no equals for beauty and goodness
 I ransom the deer of the desert who do not know
 How to chew their words nor dye their veils
 Nor do they come out of the bath bent over 15
 Their thighs have smooth tendons
 Of my loves none try to gild silver over and
 I leave the color of my gray hair without dye
 And among the loving friends in word and habit
 I do not like the hair on the face that lies
 Would that fate would give me that which it took
 From me of the mind and experience it gave
 For youth is not excluded from experience
 Indeed intelligence is found in young and old
 The royal protector grew up in a mature way 20
 Before maturity, cultured before educated
 Experienced in wisdom without the experience
 Cultured in nobility before being cultured
 Until he attained the limits of the world
 And his desire for beginnings and youth
 He controlled the kingdom of Egypt up to Aden
 To Iraq and Rum land and Nubia
 When unpredictable winds come from other lands
 They do not blow here except regularly
 And the sun does not cross when it rises 25
 Except it has permission from him to set
 The clay of his seal dispatches business there
 Even if all writing were erased by him
 The bearing of it brings down all of the lances
 From saddles of all powerful fast steeds
 As if every request in his ears
 Were the coat of Joseph to the eyes of Jacob
 When his enemies press him with a request
 They press with an unconquerable army
 If they make war they do not escape by advancing 30
 Nor by fleeing from what he intends
 His bravery readies the weakest of his squadrons
 For death, so that death is not to be feared
 They said: You fled to him for help. I said:
 To showers of his hands and cloud bursts
 To the one whose fingers give governments
 Nothing is desired in the wake of his gifts
 Nor does he frighten anyone with betrayal
 Nor does he scare with violent affliction
 No, he frightens the army which he strikes down 35
 It is like him in the dark and black dust
 I found the most useful wealth that I have stored
 The fast horse's winning gait and gallop
 When they see changes of the times betraying me
 They and the spear point are true to me

They have passed deserts until their voices say
 What sort of big, lean ones have we here?
 They love the men of action whose ideals are not
 In putting on clothes and food and drink
 He aims at stars with eyes that want them 40
 As if they were plunder to eyes of plunderers
 And so I came to the one who was veiled
 In order to meet souls of virtue unveiled
 In a strong body with pure mind that laughed at
 The nature of men as a ridiculous marvel
 Praise is his first and praise after that to them
 And to lances late at night and in the day
 And how shall I deny O Kafur your favors?
 They are told you by me O all of my goals
 O king of the wealth by which you are named 45
 In the east and the west by fame and by name
 You are the darling but yet I take refuge
 Lest I be a lover without a beloved.

245 He spoke praising Kafur in Dhu'l Hijja in the year
 346. (640)

I want from the days that which they do not want
 I wail of our parting but they are its army
 They estrange love and unite it but how can they
 Unite its union and its blocking in love?
 The world's nature is contrary to love's lasting
 So how can I ask it to bring back a lover?
 The swiftest thing you can do to bring on change
 Is undertake what is contrary to your nature
 May Allah keep camels parted from us on whom are 5
 Wild cows whose cheeks eye's second rain feel
 At the wadi for him something in the heart, as if
 When they went a neck lost its necklace
 When the howdahs moved over the greenery
 Myrtle and musk of the beauties mingled
 Many a change like one of these I aimed to master
 Less than them perils of road and its distance
 I tire of Allah's world as one whose care grows
 Soul's power falls short of what it wishes
 So do not spend all of your wealth for glory 10
 For glory whose knot is in wealth is lost so
 And it works the way the hand of glory does
 As it attacks an enemy, and wealth is its arm
 No glory in the world for one of little wealth
 No worldly wealth for one of small glory
 And among men one content with the low in life
 His vehicle his legs and his coat his skin
 Yet a heart is in my breast that has no goal
 Whose limits end for me in my intentions
 It sees its body dressed lightly to please 15
 But it prefers to wear armor that is heavy

It charges me with noon journeys in every desert
 Barley its fodder and its ostrich my food
 The sharpest weapons that a man girds on himself;
 Hope of generous Abu Musk and journey to him
 They aid him when all other aid betrays and are
 Family for one with ancestors of few offspring
 I am today of his family due to the two slaves
 We have a father in him whose sons ransom him
 From his wealth, wealth of great ones and himself 20
 From his flocks a cradle and milk for a child
 We hold the Khatti lances around his tent
 Stallions and lean ones of a squadron trot by
 We experience the arrows in every downpour
 Whose thunder echoes the bows of the cavalry
 If Egypt is not a haunt of lions or their lair
 Yet those men who are there are lions
 The silver of Kafur and his gold is that which is
 On tips of his lances, not his cash in hand
 The enemy and others about him have tested them 25
 Sport of the chase and its earnest proves it
 Abu Musk's pardon is not destroyed by your sin
 Rather his rage is destroyed by your excuse
 O he is conqueror by the sincerity of his efforts
 O he is conqueror in his efforts at sincerity
 My youth turned from me but you replace its sweet
 Its loss does not bother me when I see you
 Indeed adults in these times grow young with you
 And youths grow gray with others than you
 O would the day's heat of the journey was known 30
 Known night's coolness and you asked of it
 Would you could have watched me at Lake Hiran
 You'd known I have the edge of your sword
 For I when I begin a matter that I have planned
 Its distance is near and its hardness easy
 People of the age continue to compare me to you
 As you shine by me the uniqueness shows
 One said when I saw the army and its lord:
 Before you a king whose slave an army's lord!
 I meet a smiling mouth and I know that he 35
 Is near whose promise is in a gracious hand
 One who loves you visited you on my behalf
 His disdain was for men except for you alone
 Left behind is he who makes not your house an end
 He comes and knows this is where his power is
 And if I receive what I hope from you perhaps
 I drink water whose drinking tires birds
 Your promise is action before the promise since
 Its promise equals action true to speech
 Approve of my work like one who proves a horse 40
 The gallop and his fast paces will show you
 If you are in doubt about a sword, you test it
 And you either reject or reckon on it
 For the Indian sword is like the others
 If belt and scabbard do not part with it

Truly you are to be thanked in every respect
 Even if the support is only your affability
 Each gift exists or it is there in essence
 A glance of your eye equals it for me
 I am in a sea of goodness whose source is
 Your gifts whose tide I hope for and its flow
 But it is not my desire to profit from gold
 But rather to try something new in honor
 He is generous whose bounty disgraces generosity
 He praises him whose praise disgraces praise
 As for you when the unlucky star comes near
 You approach it but your face makes it lucky.

45

246 And the black sent one to Abu Tayyib secretly who
 said to him: You lengthen your stay at the court.
 He meant that he knew what was in his thoughts. (648)

Staying willingly is a small thing to him
 And spending generously of one's thoughts
 Since they betrayed you on smiling days
 What should they do now on the dark days?

247 Fifty slaves of the black died in the new palace to
 which he had removed in good times and he took fright
 and went out of it to another palace so Abu Tayyib
 spoke. (648)

The best of houses that claim a blessing
 Is a house that has the blessing of its king
 Finest house that pours favor on its dwellers
 Is a house where men want to favor the family
 This second dwelling of yours we congratulate
 For he who passes by the first forgets it
 When you settle in a place after making friends
 You do it proud over what you had before
 Reason has not deserted the house where you were
 For your perfume is a soul for its quarters
 He who gave you the first one completed your joy
 He will not take back your life that he gave.

5

248 He spoke also praising him when he had given him a
 black foal in the month of Rabia in the year 347.
 (649)

Parting and one I parted from was not to blame
 Journey and one I went to was best of goals
 But it is not a good home for me where house
 Has no respect and no generosity in it

It is nature to a soul not to cease from fears
 Of evil as all mountain roads are tried
 I saddled up and many a weeper with fawns' eyes
 For me, and many a tear in the lions' eyes
 A mistress of fine earrings in this place is not 5
 Anxious for the master of the sharp sword
 If my trouble were due a lover who wears a veil
 I'd excuse it but it's a lover with a turban
 He shot warding my shot and what else one wards
 In love, breaking my hand and bow and arrows
 When a man's act is wrong his thoughts are wrong
 What he is used to is true to what he fancies
 He attacks his love with hostile words
 And in the night the doubts of evil appear
 I make friends with a man's soul before his body 10
 And I know it from his actions and his speech
 I am forgiving to my friend and I know that he
 If I give him clemency for ignorance repents
 If a man is lavish in his bounty to me frowning
 I repay him leaving gifts with a smile
 I love young men who are all noble chiefs
 Of the finest like straight lance shafts
 White camel under him crosses a desert, guarding
 Him, horsemen of a huge attacking army
 There is no continence in his sword or his spear 15
 Rather it is in his hand, genitals and mouth
 Not everyone is a lover of beautiful actions
 And not all of his actions are perfect
 Generosity is a ransom for Abu Musk for that
 Is the leader of horses guided by the black
 Bright in glory they look up behind him
 To the ample nature and the perfect face
 When authority defends itself from you
 Stand still in front of it to learn from it
 Excuse is difficult for one who sees him, so he 20
 Seems weak in endeavor or small in generosity
 Who is like Kafur when the horsemen attack?
 It is little for one to say to them: Advance!
 Very sturdy are the stallions and dust comes
 Down throats of horsemen who have veils
 Abu Musk I hope from you help against the enemy
 I hope for strength to dye a sword with blood
 And today to enrage the envious and immediately
 To fix pain upon them in place of favor
 I hope only in certain people for whoever 25
 Wants rains without clouds is benighted
 If you were not in Egypt I would not have come
 With heart enslaved by a passion of love
 Nor would bedouin dogs have barked at my horse
 As in a night attack of the Dailami
 Eye of a pursuer could not follow our tracks
 Nor see any but horse's tracks above camel track
 We printed desert with them till they took a sip
 Of Nile and settled in shade of Mugattam's dust

Haughty, it violates my competence with its hint 30
 I exceeded my mark and blame by coming to him
 He poured perfume on me that was untroubled
 And I poured thanks on him that stammered
 I chose you from kings and chose for them in us
 A story, for I judged your mind and judge
 Finest face among men is the face of a patron
 The trustiest hand among them is gracious hand
 Most noble is he who is most noble in spirit
 Furthest advanced over all those magnified
 Some seek the world when they do not want it as 35
 Joy of a beloved, or evil of a criminal
 The foal has arrived which has on its withers
 Your brand which is on every neck and wrist
 Yours the creatures, riders on horseback all
 Even if on sun and moon out of this world
 If I knew how long my life was to be I'd share it
 I'd have a third wait for you, now you know!
 But yet what has passed of life is past
 So endow me with swift joy that is plunder
 I am happy you want to be a lover of mine 40
 I lead a soul to you as the surrendered is led
 Such as you are in the middle of one's heart
 So say it for me and I need not speak.

249 And he went out and spoke satirizing him. (654)

More fool than a slave and than his wife
 Is he who makes a slave judge over himself
 He who sees that you have his promise
 Is not like him who sees you in his prison
 However he will show his judgment
 By the corrupt judgment of his taste
 A slave has a nature that doesn't go beyond 5
 His stinking genitals or his grinders
 He does not perform a vow on its day
 Nor recall what he said in the evening
 He only deceives in his pulling
 As if you were a boatman on his rope
 Do not hope for success in business matters
 The slaver's hand passed over his head
 And if complaint disgraces you in him
 And his condition, look at his source
 Rarely does one blame his outside
 Without blaming his planting
 He who can find an escape from his power
 Will not find an escape from his root.

250 Some people among the slaves of Ibn Ikshid, the lord of Kafur, tried to create discord between them and

there was disquietude for some days. Then they came back to him and peace was established and Abu Tayyib spoke. (656)

Peace was cut off as the enemy wanted
 And the tongues of the envious published it
 Some desired your conduct of affairs to change
 From what they had to what they intended
 What the betrayers plotted was altered
 From blame into an increase in love
 The word of the slanderer had no power
 Over the lover but on the contrary
 Speech only succeeds in a man 5
 When it concurs with love in the heart
 By my life if you were shaken by what was said
 Yet you met it more firmly than a mountain
 And men counseled what you rejected
 You were more guided than they to guidance
 The counselor was hit because he did not strive
 He failed to make a hit after the struggle
 You got what is not obtained by sword or lance
 And you kept their souls in their bodies
 The Khatti lances were in their racks about you 10
 And the polished ones in their scabbards
 They did not know when they saw your heart quiet
 To them that its counsels were in pursuit
 He ransoms your mind who is not ransomed
 Every opinion taught wishes to ransom it
 And when intelligence is not in a nature
 Growth cannot make it mature in birth
 And by this and the like of it you ruled O
 Kafur, and you led all the intractable
 And those who submitted to you submitted 15
 But submission is not the lion's nature
 Truly you are the parent and a whipping father
 Longs for reconciliation with his child
 May evil not pass by him who seeks evil for you
 May discord single out people of discord
 And you, as long as you live, are body and soul
 May there be no need for a nurse
 When there is a difference between the joints
 Lightness falls on the breast of the lance
 Breach of promise rejoiced enemies of the Shura 20
 And healed Persia's lord from the Iyad
 And it ruled over the Banu Barid at Basra
 Until they were torn to pieces in the city
 And kings like Kms in the times of Minna
 And like Tasm and its sister in later times
 For you I spent nights seeking aid from this
 And from tricks of ambitious and evil ones
 And for your firm wits lest sharp lances
 Among the steeds make a division
 Or that near ones should split in enmity 25
 With what they hoarded up as weapons

Can they remain happy after what has passed
 What will the enemy say in all the assemblies?
 Love and trust and leadership forbid
 That you carry out your anger
 The truth softens heart to heart
 Even if it were surety for hearts of stone
 And when the king is victorious one sees
 Gratefully what you bring of stability
 Thus your gifts are sweet with victory 30
 The hands of the people are on the livers
 This is the government of noble acts and mercy
 And glory and bounty and gifts
 They were absent an hour like the sun is absent
 But they returned and their light increases
 His forces defend the times from their evils
 With proud young men against the rebels
 Destructive, independent, faithful, proud
 Wise, strict, brave, and generous
 Men leave the way open to Abu Musk 35
 And the necks of slaves submit to him
 Why should the road not be left to the torrent
 If each valley is too narrow for its current?

251 And he spoke praising him in Shawwal 347 and he had just sent him 600 dinars. (600)

I fight longing for you but longing is victorious
 I wonder at flight but union is more amazing
 Do the days trick me in that I see
 The hateful afar or the beloved near by?
 By Allah! how small was the delay in my journey
 At evening al Hādāla and Burrab to the east
 Eve, when the kindest man to me was one I incensed,
 The more guided of two roads I put aside
 How many a helping hand for you on dark nights 5
 Has proved that the Manichaeans were lying
 Saves you from death by enemy as you go to them
 And the one modestly veiled visited you there
 Many a day like the night of lovers I have hid in
 As I watched for the sun to set there
 And my eyes were on the elegant ears as if they
 Were a bit of night and twixt its eyes a star
 He has a fineness in the skin over his body
 That comes and goes over his broad breast
 I cut through the dark with him with tight reins 10
 He rebels so I loosen at times and he plays
 Many a beast I bring down with him as I track it
 I dismount from him; he is like when I mounted
 And horses like friends are only too few
 Though many to the untrained eye
 If you don't see anything but beauty of markings
 And of limb, then beauty is hid from you

Allah damn the world as resting place for rider
 For all of high ambition are punished here
 O would that I knew how to speak a qasida 15
 Without complaining in it or reproaching
 A thing in me--a bit of it keeps poetry away
 Yet my heart O daughter of the camp alters
 And Kafur's nature, when I wish to praise it
 Or if I do not, dictates to me and I write
 When a man leaves his family behind him
 And journeys to Kafur it is not strange
 A youth who fills deeds with wisdom and judgment
 And rarities whenever pleased or angry
 When his hand strikes in war with the sword 20
 It is plain the sword strikes by a hand
 His gifts increase in number as time goes on
 But the water of the clouds dries up in time
 Abu Musk is there a bit in a cup for me to take?
 For I sing while you drink
 You gave according to measure of our time's hands
 My soul seeks according to your hands' measure
 If you dress me not with an estate or governorship
 Your bounty cloaks and your work plunders me
 Every man on this festival smiles at his beloved 25
 Except me and I weep for one I love and mourn
 I long for my family and want to meet them
 But where is the anqa of the west for lovers?
 And if there were only Abu Musk or them
 You'd be sweeter to my heart and tastier
 But every man who bestows favors is beloved
 And every place that grows glory is sweet
 The jealous want for you what Allah forbids
 As do brown spears and the keen steel
 Before their desire is that, if they escaped it 30
 In death, you'd thrive on as their kids grayed
 As they seek your bounty they are given, assigned
 If they seek your virtue they are balked
 If it were right to take your rank you'd give it
 But some things are not bestowed
 Most evil of evil ones is one who nightly envies
 One who nightly ponders his good works
 You are the one who brought up the suckling king
 Who had neither mother nor father but you
 And you were the lion of the den to this cub 35
 You had no other claws but the Indian sword
 You met the lances with generous soul for him
 Fleeing to death in battle away from shame
 But it leaves that soul alone which is not base
 While it ruins the soul that is fearful
 Your opponents did not lack bravery and energy
 But one they met was stronger and nobler
 You beat them and sword flash on helmet was true
 For them but helmet flash on sword fruitless
 You unsheathed swords and taught every preacher 40
 On every pulpit how to pray and preach

It is useless to you that men trace geneologies
 Since noble acts are traced to and end in you
 What tribe is there whose worth deserves you?

Ma'ad ibn Adnan is your ransom and Yarub
 My pleasure when I saw you was not artificial
 I had hoped to see you and was pleased
 My verses and my ambition reproached me for you
 As if in praising before your praise I sinned
 But the road was long and I was always
 Sought after for words, and they were booty
 So they went east until east was not east
 And to the west until the west was not west
 When I spoke them their coming was not firbidden
 By towering wall or rope held tent.

45

252 And Abu Tayyib learned that some people at the court
 of Saif al Daula in Aleppo claimed he was dead so he
 spoke in the year 348. (667)

Where is consolation without family or country?
 Neither drinking pal nor cup nor quiet
 I desire of my time that it achieve for me
 That which the time cannot achieve by itself
 Do not meet your destiny except without grief
 So long as your spirit has body for company
 For the happiness which you enjoyed does not last
 And grief does not bring back to you the past
 What hinders the people of love is that they
 Love but know not the world nor comprehend it
 Their eyes fade with tears and their souls
 Track every ugly one whose face is pretty
 Load up! let any fast camel carry you
 For every parting for me today is desirable
 What is in your howdahs is no double for my heart
 Nor is there any value in it if I die of love
 O you by whom I was named dead afar in his court
 Crepe hangers' thought is all pledged to occur
 How often I'm killed and dead according to you
 Then I give a shake and tomb and coffin go
 A crowd witnessed my burial before they spoke
 Then they died before they had the grave dug
 Not everything a man desires can he achieve
 Winds blow where the boat does not want to go
 I see your neighbor doesn't protect his honor
 Nor does the milk flow over your pastures
 Boredom requites all those near to you
 And the gift of every lover from you is hate
 You are angry with those who receive your favors
 Until bother and blame are the end of it
 Separation has left what was between me and you
 A desert in which eye and ear are deceivers

5

10

15

The fast camel crawls there after having raced
 And callouses ask earth about foot pads
 I accept my clemency so long as it is generous
 But not forbearance when it is cowardly
 And I do not stay with wealth that humiliates
 Nor do I enjoy that which dirties my honor
 I stayed awake after my journey lonely for you 20
 Then my rope held steady and my sleep repented
 If I suffered from a love like your love
 Then I would be ready for a parting like that
 I wore out my foal's saddle cloth among others
 Cheek straps and halter changed at Fustat
 With the hero Abu Musk in whose bounty
 Mudhar the golden and Yemen are drowned
 And if some of his promises are slow
 My hopes are not slow nor are they weak
 He is the faithful one and only I remind him 25
 Of love, but he is testing and proving it.

253 Among those which he spoke in Egypt and did not re-
 cite to the black and did not mention him in them.
 (671)

Men before us were friends of their time
 And worried about great things as we worry
 And all of them turned away choking with it
 Even if some of them were happy at times
 Often one finds good the workings of the nights
 And then one finds their beauties turbid
 As if they were not content with us in doubts
 Of destiny so they attack one they helped
 Each time that fate makes the shafts grow 5
 Men fit the lances with spear heads
 But such intentions of the soul are too small
 For us to quarrel about and to perish in
 No young man should meet death
 In gloomy fashion nor meet it basely
 And if life were preserved only for the living
 We'd count our brave man as our most lost
 And if there were no necessity in death
 Then it would be only weakness to be coward
 Everything which was difficult before it occurred 10
 Is easy for a soul when it happens.

254 And he spoke commemorating the rebellion of Shabib
 al Uqaill in the year 348. (672)

Your enemy is blamed by every tongue
 Even if sun and moon were among your enemies

Allah has a secret concerning your exaltation
 And words of the enemy are a kind of madness
 Do the enemies seek after what they have seen
 Established proof or clear demonstration?
 They saw every one who aimed to betray you tried
 By betrayal of life or betrayal of the times
 In spite of Shabib his hand parted from the sword 5
 And they were companions in all difficulties
 As if the necks of men said to his sword:
 Your friend must be Qais for you are Yemeni!
 So if he was a man he went his way
 For death is the goal of all living things
 But he was only a fire in every place
 Stirring up dust instead of smoke
 He obtained a life which his enemies longed for
 A death that makes every coward wish for death
 He blocked the spear point's blow with his spear 10
 Nor feared star force or Aldebaran
 And did not know death above his top knot
 With borrowed wing fine for flying
 He had killed warriors until you killed him
 With weakest warrior and in lowest place
 Death came to him by a path hidden to
 Every ear and eye round about him
 Had it trod a path of arms he'd have repelled it
 By right arm's length and heart's breadth
 Fate aimed at him in the midst of his friends 15
 Confident of his destiny and secure in it
 Of what use is a huge army gathering round
 Without any succour or divine aid?
 Before night, he paid for his crime with himself
 And he did not give herds of camels
 Did a rational hand take what you gave him
 And take those reins in his ingratitude?
 Did he ride consideration you mounted him on
 Ride the back of a stallion to rebellion?
 The benefits doubled his hand until it was as if 20
 In its grabbing there were no more fingers
 Where nowadays is there loyalty to masters?
 Shabib and the trustiest you see are brothers!
 Allah has judged O Kafur that you are the prince
 It is not decreed a second to you be seen
 Why should you choose the bow when
 One shoots away from you both races in luck?
 Why do you take care of the spear and the lance
 Since your bounty thrusts without spear point?
 And why carry the sword whose belt is long 25
 Since you are freed from it by events?
 Wish some good for me whether you give it or not
 For whatever you want for me will come to me
 If you hated the movement of the churning heavens
 Something would hinder it from its movement.

255 He spoke in Egypt in commemoration of a fever which
he had in Dhu'l Hijja in the year 348. (675)

The blame of you two is wide of the fault
And the force that it has is beyond the word
Let me alone for the desert is without a guide
And the face of midday has no veil
For I wish to find relief in this and in that
And I am exhausted by stopping and staying
My mount's eyes are like my eyes if I am feverish
Every groan of the overworked beast my groan
I can reach water without a guide 5
Instead of counting flashes from its clouds
My sword and my Lord give protection to my heart
When the single person requires a guard
I don't say good evening as a guest to misers
No hospitality except ostrich bone marrow
And when the friendship of men becomes betrayal
I repay the smiles with smiles
I have my doubts about the one I have chosen
Due to my knowledge he is one of mankind
Intelligent people love according to qualities 10
But ignorant love is according to appearance
I reject a brother, my father and mother's son,
When I do not find him of a noble nature
I know that parents are often overcome
By evil nature in their children
I am not satisfied with any virtues
That are traced to illustrious ancestors
But I am surprised at one who has power and edge
Glancing off as a blunt and dull sword's blow
And who finds the way to the heights 15
But wears down no camel till it has no hump
And I have seen nothing so blameworthy among men
As the defecting of the able from perfection
I have settled in Egypt's land and neither back
Nor forward has the camel moved with me
The bed disgusts me though my side
Has inclined to meet it only once in a year
Few are my visitors, sick is my heart
Many the jealous and difficult my goal
My body is ailing, my rising forbidden 20
Violent the giddiness without any wine
The one who comes to me seems to be ashamed
For she does not visit except in the dark
I lavished upon her a gown and a bed
But she declined them and slept in my bones
The skin is too tight for my breath and it sighs
So she stretches it in the ways of sickness
When she leaves me she washes me as if
We two were addicted to sacred ritual
As if the dawn drove her away so that her tears 25
Ran from all four corners in showers

I wait for her moment without any love
 With a waiting of passionate longing
 Her promise is true but it is an evil promise
 When it hits you in agony of bone
 O daughter of times, with me every daughter
 How could you alone get through the crowd?
 You have wounded me with such wounds that here
 There is no place for swords or arrows
 O will my hand ever know the touch 30
 That manages the reins or the tether?
 And shall I attain my object with a trotter
 Whose tether is silvered with sweat?
 Perhaps I shall heal the boiling in my chest
 With a journey or the lance or sword
 But the way is blocked that I want to be free in
 With the freedom of wine from web of sieve
 If I could part from this lover without farewell
 I'd leave this land without a good-by
 The doctor said to me: You have eaten something 35
 Your illness is in eating and drinking.
 It's not in his skill for I am a thoroughbred
 The long stay in stable injures my body
 It is used to getting dusty in the sortie
 Rushing from dust cloud to dust cloud
 For it is restrained and not loose to graze
 Nor is it in the barley nor bridled
 And if I am sick yet my courage is not sick
 And if I am fevered yet my will is not ill
 And if I surrender I will not stay but rather 40
 I am safe from one death in another death
 Enjoy the waking or the sleeping
 And do not hope for sleep within the tomb
 For in that third state the meaning
 Is another meaning than waking or sleeping.

256 And he spoke praising Kafur the Ikshid and he recited
 it in Shawwal 347 and did not meet him after that.
 (680)

Wishes once were mine the dye might be white
 So youth be hid by graying of the locks
 My nights with beauties made my curls a charm
 And honor, but my boast now is a fault
 But how can I blame today what I once desired
 Pray for what I'd complain of if granted?
 One color succeeds to another guided every way
 Like the mist rises at the beams of day
 In body soul does not grow gray with its graying 5
 Even if what was on its face was warlike
 She has claws even if I pull back every claw
 And fangs when no fangs remain in the mouth

Destiny changes me as it wants but not her
 I reach life's goal but she is a girl
 Indeed I have a star that guides my companions
 When the clouds shift beneath the stars
 Home lands are expendables and returns to a place
 Do not provoke me once I journey from it
 So are the fast trotting camels when they go 10
 If not these, eagles have their saddles
 And I get thirsty but I show no need for water
 While the heat rays weave above the camel
 Among my secrets there is one a drinking pal
 Will not receive, nor will the wine get it
 I had a pretty woman an hour and then we parted
 A desert was crossed to another meeting
 For love is nothing but perplexity and lust
 A heart opposed to itself and overwhelmed
 My heart is not a target for singing girls 15
 Nor are my fingers mounts for the cups
 We leave every passion for the points of lances
 No playing for us except with them
 We bear them to the jousting on the heavy ones
 And by that their ferrules are broken
 Best place in the world is a fast swimming horse
 And the best of sittings at times is a book
 And a sea full of water is Abu Musk who has
 Above all seas rising tides that overflow
 It exceeds the power of praise until it's as if 20
 The finest one can honor in him is only blame
 The enemy contends with him and then submits
 As a neck contends with a sword's brightness
 Most do not meet Abu Musk in common dress
 Clothing does not protect unless it be iron
 Broadest chested of those who meet him, behind
 Archers and spearmen, in front the enemy
 Sharpest in judgment of those who face him, he
 Judges a case earth's kings are enraged at
 His virtue leads men in submission to him 25
 If not, then his gifts and fines do
 O lion in whose body is the soul of a fierce one
 How many lions have the souls of dogs?
 O he takes from the times what is due his soul
 And such as you give and endow with right
 For us in this age it is right he disown it
 For satisfactions are few and complaints long
 The days have adopted a new habit with you
 Times flourish though they were a waste
 No king but you, but kingship is an external 30
 You are a sword and that the scabbard
 I know that I by being near you calmed my vision
 Even if the nearness is mingled with distance
 And what use that a curtain between us is raised
 If before what I hoped from you is a veil?
 My greeting is small from no light love for you
 And I am silent so there may be no response

In me there are wants and in you is sagacity
 My silence is plain in this and the prayer
 I am not desirous of a bribe for the sake of love 35
 It's weak passion that wants reward for itself
 Nor do I want anything but to humble my censurers
 So that my idea may be true to your thought
 I know some people differed from me eastward
 And I went west and I conquered and they lost
 Discord comes except with you for you are unique
 You are the lion and other kings wolves
 And if you check the meter as a reader misreads
 "Wolves" he'd not mistake if he said "flies"
 Indeed the praise of men is both true and vain 40
 But your praise is true no falsehood in it
 When I have love from you wealth is of no account
 And all that is above the earth is dust
 I would be nothing but a pilgrim except for you
 Each day a new country and companions for him
 But through you the world is beloved to me
 No parting for me from you except to return.

257 He spoke mocking Kafur. (688)

By what paths could nobility come to you
 Where is the leech cup and scalpel O Kafur?
 They exceeded their rank who owned your hand
 For they learned in you a dog was above them
 Nothing more ugly than a stallion with a penis
 Having a mother to lead him with no womb
 Rulers of each people come from among themselves
 But the rulers of the Muslims are base slaves
 Is it a goal of religion your mustaches be shaved 5
 O people nations mock due to their ignorance?
 Will no youth water an Indian blade with his head
 To end the complaints and suspicions of men?
 For he is proof of evil to hearts; those whose
 Religion is fate and delay and favoritism
 How exalted is Allah when he abashes his creation
 And does not support people who think thus.

258 And he spoke also mocking him. (689)

Is there in this world no generosity and
 Has concern ceased from the heart?
 Is there in this world no place where
 Settled neighbor enjoys his family?
 Beasts and servants of Allah become alike
 Among us as freedmen and those of lineage
 I do not know whether it is a new illness
 That plagues men or an old disease

I came to the land of Egypt as a servant 5
 It seemed the free among them were orphans
 As if the Nubian blacks that were there
 Were crows, around them vultures and owls
 I hated to praise him since I saw my words
 Delighted the fools O like the intelligent
 And when I mocked I knew the feebleness
 Of my words to a jackal O vile one!
 But what excuse is there for this and that
 Since the sick man can't avoid sickness?
 When the evil doer comes from vileness 10
 And suffers no harm whom do I blame?

259 And he looked at the black one day and said. (690)

If this food were our provision for
 A guest we would spread it courteously
 But we are his guests and obviously
 He spreads for us only lies and calumny
 Would that he would leave the way free to us
 May Allah help him and us!

260 And Abu Tayyib wrote to him about a trip to Ramla
 to see about property of his there and he wanted to
 find out what the black would think of his journey
 but he answered: No, by Allah, we do not permit
 the journey but we will send someone to take care
 of the matter for you. (691)

Have you sworn not to permit me to go
 To town to take care of business there?
 And you have allowed me this unfortunate place
 Utmost exile and in worst condition
 Someday when we travel from al Fustat
 And he pursues me with horses and men
 You will know the power you parted from in me
 And that you aimed at my hurt in vain.

261 And he spoke on the day of Arafat and left Egypt in
 the year 350. (691)

Festival in what state do you return O festival
 With what past or what things that are new?
 But my dear ones--desert is between them and me
 O for desert before you and me and then desert
 But for eminence she'd not cross what I crossed
 That strong camel nor the lanky horse

And sweeter than my sword as a bedmate would be
 A slender girl like it in brightness
 Time has not left for my heart or my liver 5
 Anything that eye or neck can enslave
 O my two wine bearers is there wine in your cups
 Or is care and wakefulness in your cups?
 Am I a rock? What is wrong in me that this wine
 Does not rouse me nor yet this singing?
 And when I wanted the red wine pure
 I found it, but my soul's darling was gone
 What have I found in the world? I am surprised
 That what I wept for was envied
 I am at ease in riches as to treasurer and hand 10
 I am wealthy but my property is promises
 I have settled with liars as their guest
 Forbidden hospitality and departure
 Generosity is in men's hands but their bounty in
 Tongues, if only they and their bounty were not
 But death doesn't take a single soul of them
 Unless his hand has a stick due to the stink
 With each looseness the belly sphincter breaks
 Not counted as men nor yet as women
 Each time an evil slave murders his master 15
 Or betrays him his training was in Egypt
 The eunuch became leader of runaway slaves there
 The free man enslaved and the slave obeyed
 Egypt's overseers have slept while their foxes
 Ate too much and still the grapes aren't gone
 The slave is no brother to a good freeborn man
 Even if born in clothes of a free man
 Do not buy a slave unless a stick is with him
 For slaves are filthy and troublesome 1
 I never thought I would live to the time when 20
 A dog would do me dirt and be praised here
 Nor did I imagine that men would be lost
 And that the white father's like be found
 And that the pierced black with his camel lips
 Would have trembling sycophants obey him
 Hungry, he eats my provisions and detains me
 So he be named: Worthy power, sought after.
 A man whom a pregnant slave woman manages
 Oppressed with inflamed eyes and weak heart
 What a mistake it was, alas for one accepting it 25
 For it long Mahri camels were made
 In such matters who drinks death enjoys a taste
 Death for one who is humiliated is sweet
 Who taught the black eunuch generosity
 His white people or his royal father?
 Or his ears bleeding in the hand of slave trader
 Or his value rejected at two farthings?
 First to be excused by the vile is little Kafur
 In each fault some excuses are blame
 That is because the white stallions are feeble 30
 In fineness, so what about black eunuchs?

262 And he spoke in Egypt and wrote it to Abd al Aziz
ibn Yusuf al Khazay. (695)

May their Lord repay Arabs who stay at Bilbais
For their kindness may their eyes be cooled
Karakina of Qais ibn Ailan are wide awake
Their eyelids and sword sheaths are lofty
And especially Abd al Aziz ibn Yusuf
For he is their rain shower and stream
The youth in my eyes adorns the tribe's farthest
How many chiefs in the area doesn't he adorn?

263 And he spoke mocking Wardan ibn Rabia of Tai with
whom he stayed on the road from Egypt. (696)

If you are of Tai they are blameworthy
And their forebears Rabia and his sons
Or if you are of Tai they were noble
But Wardan's father is not one of theirs
At Hisma we passed by one of his slaves
He dripped filth from his nose and mouth
He seduced my slaves with his woman
So he destroyed them and they destroyed him
And if my horse was unhappy with their hands
His face is unhappy with my sword.

264 He spoke also mocking him. (697)

May Allah curse Wardan and the girl with him
His profit of a pig and snout of a fox
His betrayal was only an indication
Of what his mother and father were
When a man makes a profit from his wife's sex
O he's worst of men--O worst of profits
O this little pair, lady Wardan and his daughter
Earning their living in the worst trade
I disproved the betrayal of the Tai origin
But don't blame me; many a friend is belied.

265 And he spoke also about the slave who took his horse
and sword. (697)

I reckoned them as betrayers of the swords
I cut off their noses with them
May Allah not pity their heads when they
Send flying the tops of their skulls
The sword avenges not a few of them
Would that there were a hundred thousand

O worst of flesh whose life I took
 And that went to the belly of the hyena
 You could have done without your begging of me 5
 Who took omens of birds for me and augured
 I promised this blade whoever it met
 I was afraid of mutiny when you appeared
 Goodness does not remember if you are named
 Nor does a pair of eyes follow you streaming
 When a man alarms me with his betrayal
 I bring him to the goal he fears.

266 And he spoke also. (698)

Busaita you make the rain fall slowly
 You leave the eyes of my servants confused
 They thought the ostrich near you a palm
 They thought the antelope near you a minaret
 My friends hung on to their saddles
 But laughter got to them and was hard on them.

267 And he spoke when he entered Kufa describing the road
 from Egypt and mocking Kafur in the first of the
 month of Rabia in the year 351. (699)

O all of the mincing women's walks
 Are ransom for every fast she-camel's gait
 And every Bujawi that can rescue
 Though clumsy, for a graceful pace is nothing
 Moreover they are life lines
 Tricks to the enemy and defenses against evil
 With her I beat the desert by a gambler's stroke
 That might have been one way or another
 When she took fright there were horsemen ahead 5
 And bright swords and brown lances
 So she passed by Nakhla and in her progress
 Did without the people and the place itself
 At evening she gave us a choice at al Niqab
 Of the Wadi of Waters or the Wadi of Villages
 We said to her: Where is the land of Iraq?
 She said as we were at Turban: Over there.
 In Hisma she went with a motion of the west wind
 Facing the force of the east wind
 Aiming at Kifaf and Kibd al Wihad 10
 And Jar al Buwaira the valley of tamarisks
 She cut through Busaita like a sword
 Among the ostriches and wild cows
 To Uqdat al Jauf until she slaked
 At the water of Jarawi some of her thirst
 Sawwar and the dawn appeared to her and then
 Al Shagur appeared in the forenoon

Her galloping brought her at evening to al Jumal
 And morning to al Adari and then al Dana
 O that was a night for you at Akush 15
 The land all dark and signposts hid
 We arrive at Ruhaima in the middle of it
 The remainder of it more than what was past
 When we made camels kneel we set up our spears
 Over our generous deeds and our eminence
 And we spent the night kissing our swords
 And wiping them clean of the enemies' blood
 So Egypt might know and those in Iraq
 And those in al Awasim that I am the youth
 And that I have been true and I have rejected 20
 I rebelled against those who were presumptuous
 But not everyone who speaks a word is faithful
 Not everyone forced to humiliation rejects it
 And he who has a heart like my heart
 Splits the heart of destruction to glory
 But there has to be some tool for the heart
 And some idea to split the hardest rock
 And every path that the youth takes
 Finds his step by the measure of his legs
 The little slave slept unwitting of our night 25
 He slept before in blindness not slumber
 In spite of our closeness there was between us
 Deserts of his ignorance and blindness
 Indeed I had thought before this eunuch
 That the head was the place of reason
 But when I looked at his wits
 I knew reason was altogether in the balls
 What ridiculous things there were in Egypt
 But it was laughter that was close to tears
 A Nabataean of the people of the black land 30
 Taught genealogies of people of the desert
 And the black who was half lip
 One spoke to him: You moon of darkness!
 As for verses I praised him as the rhinoceros
 At times with poetry at times with spells
 And this praise was not for him
 But rather it was satire on mankind
 Some people have gone astray with their idols
 But with a wind bag, O no!
 And those were deaf and he was talkative 35
 When the farts moved him or the stutters
 When one's self is ignorant of his worth
 Others see what he does not see of himself.

268 And he spoke mocking the black. (704)

Heart's core but his heart is too narrow
 A toast but the belly is too large

His people are dying with rage at the times
 As Fatik and Shabib died of rage
 I intended his castration and then I left him
 He followed me like a sun but it was dark
 When you lack ancestors, reason and generosity
 There is nothing good in life for you.

269 He spoke praising Abu Shuja Fatik nicknamed Majnun
 in the year 348. (704)

No horses to make as a gift and no flocks but
 Speech brings joy if wealth does not rejoice
 So repay the Emir who has been kind unexpectedly
 Without plea though men's gifts must be begged
 Often she repays kind deeds of one near her
 This lazy pearl among virgins of the tribe
 And if there are strong hobbles which prevent me
 From running free, yet there is whinnying
 I do not give thanks because wealth delights me 5
 Little or much is equal with me
 But I think it ugly that he is generous with us
 And that we by authority's decree are miserly
 For I was growth of waste land meadow and a shower
 Came at dawn, a downpour on earth not salty
 A shower whose effect is clear to the onlookers
 But showers are ignorant of what they bring
 Only a master of sagacity can attain glory
 When action is difficult for masters
 None inherit whose right hands ignore their giving 10
 None acquire without the sword demanding
 Time spoke a word to him and he understood it
 For time is censorious of the tightfisted
 The lance knows when it is shaken by his hand
 The horseman and hero are unhappy with it
 Like Fatik...but comparison is lacking somewhat
 Like the sun I had said but sun is no trope
 The leader of the lions whose claws feed those
 Who are his cubs with the like of his enemies
 A sword's killer is the body of one killed by it 15
 For there is an end for swords as for men
 Fear for him protects him in war
 His flocks are unshepherded in far pastures
 His is whatever wild game his spear chooses
 Wild asses, ostrich, boars and wild bulls
 Guests at evening have their desire in his court
 As if sunset's cool was brought for them
 If they desire meat their host hurries it to them
 A cut of it on a platter and even a haunch
 He knows no bad luck either in wealth or children 20
 Except as he sends guests on their journey
 He waters avid earth with their drink's leavings
 Cream of camel's milk and wine of pure color

He entertains by his sword hourly dripping blood
 As if each moment guests arrived and returned
 Life flows round about him in mingled fashion
 Some of it the enemies, some sheep and camels
 Distance does not prohibit his gifts to men afar
 Nor are children kept by weakness from them
 His the sharpest sword among heroes of two armies 25
 And swords are guided while spears go astray
 It seems his fame is weaker than sight of him
 Among men some are water and some are mirage
 Indeed the jealous call him Majnun the mad one
 As swords clash and sometimes reason clogs
 He hits armies with them no escaping him or them
 In his cleaving even if armies are mountains
 And so for the enemy when his claws are in them
 Clemency and lions cannot be joined for them
 Destiny's course in him always terrifies them 30
 Openly but fate's mishaps come unexpectedly
 His boldness attains the height of nobility
 They gain it not who guard against the comer
 While kings adorn themselves his ornaments are
 Indian swords and quivering lances' nipples
 Abu Shuja, father of the bold without exception
 Terror feeds him with fearful battles
 You possess praise until for those who boast
 There is neither hah, nor mim nor dal
 Upon him there is a double coat of it 35
 So that he has no need of a coat of mail
 How should I hide good deeds you conferred
 You have overflowed with gifts O bounteous
 You were kind in thinking of my safety and good
 The generous are the height of tact
 So you made it public and the news spread
 And hope in your hands reached the stars
 My praise is as long as he who wears it tall
 Praise for the dwarfs is dwarf like
 If you had pride to be conceited among men 40
 Your worth by their worth could be haughty
 As if you were not content with yourself
 As friend, until you excel in excellence
 You did not consider yourself safe in its heart
 Until you were spendthrift of fear for it
 If it were not for hardship all men would rule
 Generosity become poor and boldness death
 And even though each man achieves his capacity
 Not every runner has the legs of a fast camel
 These times have left off ugliness through him 45
 For most men he is the best and the finest
 Hero's memory is second life and witness
 Hardship feeds it and exuberance of life.

270 And Abu Shuja Fatik died in Egypt early in the

eleventh night of Shawwal in the year 350. (711)

Grief disquiets me and courtesy holds back
 The tears between these two rebel and submit
 These dispute over tears of my sleepless eyes
 One brings them and the other takes them
 Sleep after Abu Shuja is frightened
 And the night tired and the stars lame
 I become a coward at the departure of my beloved
 But if my soul has a taste of death I am brave
 The anger of my enemy increases my harshness 5
 Blame of a friend pains me and I am anxious
 Life for the ignorant or forgetful is skimming
 Both what is past and what is yet to come
 And for him who mistakes the value of himself
 Making insatiable search for the impossible
 Where is he whose monument was two hoary pyramids?
 What were his people, his times, his death?
 The tradition remained with their contemporaries
 Then ruin overtook them and they followed
 Achievements did not content Abu Shuja's heart 10
 Before his death, nor rank he had attained
 We had thought that his house was filled with
 Gold but he died and all the house was waste
 But then nobility and scimitars and lances and
 Daughters of Awaj were all he collected
 Glory is perishable and nobility is an agreement
 So nobility's beauty cannot live from them
 Men are living at too low a level in your times
 For you to live by them; your worth is higher
 Cool my heart with a word if you are able 15
 You could oppose as you wished and be useful
 Never before this was there from you for a friend
 Anything which made him doubt or gave pain
 Indeed I knew you and no calamity came near you
 Except what a wise heart dispelled from you
 Or a hand making its battles and gifts as it were
 Duties you were responsible for voluntarily
 O you who changed your garments every day
 And now content with a garment not taken off
 You did not cease to put robes on those who wanted 20
 Until one day you put one on not honorary
 You did not cease to take on every heavy burden
 Until a burden came that could not be accepted
 And you stayed to see your lance was not ready
 For what attacked you nor would your sword cut
 By my father all alone! and the numerous army
 Wept; but tears are the worst of weapons
 And when you were left with weeping as weapons
 You feared in your heart and your cheeks wet
 A hand came to you which finds of equal value 35
 The gray falcon and the speckled crow
 Who is there now for assembly, army or raid?
 Lost in your loss a star rising no more

And who will you take as successor for the guests
 Who lose their way while you go not astray?
 Ugly be your face O time for it
 Is a face that is veiled with all ugliness!
 Did such a one as Abu Shuja Fatik die but
 He who envied him, stub toed eunuch, lives?
 The chopped off hands lie near his head 30
 One cries to a neck there: Will no one strike?
 You let stay the worst liar you ever let stay
 You took the truest who spoke and was heard
 You left the most stinking wind ever damned
 Stole the sweetest perfume that ever spread
 Today the blood of all the frightened animals
 Is calm and it is as if he loomed far off
 The knots of the whip and his horses are at peace
 Their back legs and forelegs come together
 The sortie canceled, no spear point drips blood 35
 Above the shaft, and no sword clashes
 He turns away and each friend and drinking pal
 After privacy takes a last walk saying good-by
 He who was a refuge for every people and
 Found pasture for his sword in every nation
 If he stopped among Persians there he was lord
 Chosroes, neck yielded to him and stooped
 Or if he settled among Romans there he was Caesar
 Or if he stayed with Arabs among them Tuba
 He was the fastest rider in the jousting 40
 On horseback, but yet death was quicker
 May the hand of a horseman not grip the lance
 After him, nor four feet carry the steed.

271 And there came to him at Kufa a friend with an apple
 spiced and on it Fatik's name. So he took and read
 it and said. (716)

Its wittiness recalls Fatik
 For something of spice is in his name
 I am not forgetful but yet
 The smell of it renews for me his perfume
 What a youth death plundered
 Not even his mother knew what she had borne
 She would not have pressed him to her breast
 Had she known what she clasped to her there 5
 The kings in Egypt have its wealth
 But they, not they have his spirit
 More generous than their bounty is his economy
 More laudable than their eulogy is his blame
 More noble than their lives is his death
 More useful than their wealth is his poverty
 Truly his death in his house
 Was like the wine that nobility pours out

For that is the water which one drinks
 And that is his taste which one savors
 And he whose spirit earth was too narrow for
 Finds it natural his body is cramped by her.

272 And Abu Tayyib spoke after his departure from the
 City of Peace recalling his journey from Egypt and
 lamenting the death of Fatik and he recited it on
 the twelfth day of the first half of Shaban 352.
 (718)

How long will we follow the stars in darkness
 When their journey is not with hoofs or feet?
 And do not feel in the eyelids what one feels
 In lost sleep as a traveler wakes the night
 The sun has blackened the white of our faces but
 Not blackened our white locks or braids
 And their condition would be under one judgment
 If we judged by the judgment of the world
 We do not let the water cease from traveling 5
 Going in the clouds or in the water bag
 I do not chide the camel since with her I protect
 My heart from grief and my body from sickness
 With back legs I drove her front legs from Egypt
 Until we shot away from Jawsh and Alam
 Those desert ostriches exhausted the saddled ones
 Matching the camels' soft tether with bridle
 With young fellows who chose danger and delight
 In what comes, content with chance arrows' fall 10
 They display to us as they toss off their turbans
 Turbans created black without a veil
 Pale cheeked, they spear those they pursue among
 The horsemen as they drive off the camels
 They get with the spear what is beyond its power
 But do not achieve the limit of their desire
 It is in the time of ignorance except that they
 Due to their good nature are in truce months
 Casting spears which though they cannot talk
 Teach them birds' screams for the brave
 The camels speed with us their lips frothing 15
 Their hoofs green with ragal and yanam
 We beat them with whips of drivers, muzzled from
 Bushy growth, we desire a growth of glory
 And where is its growth after his growth
 Abu Shuja the chosen of Arabs and non-Arabs?
 There is no other Fatik in the Egypt we went to
 Nor a successor to him among all mankind
 Those who are unlike him in character when alive
 Are like him when dead in their rotten bones
 I miss him and it is as if I am going to seek him 20
 But the world will not repay me for the loss

I can't stop smiling at my camel when she looks
 At what colors her hoofs with blood
 I brought her among the idols to show her them
 But I didn't find among them idol's chastity
 Until I came back and my pen had a word for me:
 Glory is the sword's, glory is not the pen's
 Always write with us after the writing with it
 If I slip, my ransom is I have little wit
 It made me hear and my cure was what it advised me 25
 For indeed we are servants to the swords
 He who fulfills his needs other than by a sword
 Answers every question of How with No
 People imagine it is weakness brings us to them
 And that to approach tends to suspicion
 But a failure of justice cannot stop harshness
 Among men, even if they are from the same womb
 So let there be no visits unless you visit them
 With hands prepared for the polished sword
 In every case its edges decide for death 30
 In what is between the avenger and the avenged
 Keep its hilt clean of them so that blame can
 Not reach it in my hands nor yet stingingness
 What is hard to see is contemptible to vision
 For the waking eye is like the dreaming one
 Do not be scandalized at people and disappointed:
 The wounded's complaint at crows and vultures
 Be on your guard against men but conceal it
 And do not let a smiling mouth confuse you
 Faithfulness is rare, you do not often meet it 35
 Trust scarce, either in word or promise
 Praise to my soul's Creator since its pleasure is
 What other souls see as the peak of pain
 Destiny is amazed at my bearing its misfortunes
 At my body's patience in burning misfortunes
 A time for going astray, would the time of life
 Were among another people of bygone nations
 Whose sons came in times that were in their youth
 And made them happy, but we come in old age.

273 He spoke mocking Thabba ibn Yazid al Utby, and he is
 frank in his satire in this qasida because he had no
 understanding so as to be aware of the attack. And
 when this qasida was read to al Mutanabbi he refused
 to recite it and I too, by Allah, dislike writing it
 and commenting on it and prefer not to pass it on.
 However, I relate it for what there is in it and may
 Allah, be He exalted, forgive whoever is in error so
 that he may not slip before Him. He spoke it in
 Jumada in the latter part of 353. (723)

How unjust people are to Thabba
 And to his long breasted mother

They knocked his father on his head
 And jumped the overcome mother
 There is no honor for one who is dead
 Nor love for those fooled with
 But I have said what I said
 Out of pity and not out of love
 And this is deceit for you since 5
 You'd be excused if you only knew
 But it's not your fault that he
 Was killed, for it was a fight
 Nor was the seduction your fault
 For that was abuse
 And it's not your fault that
 Your mother was a shameful drab
 It's no hardship to a dog
 That he is a son-of-a-bitch
 It did not bother her who got to her 10
 But it did bother her loins
 He did not fool with her, though
 Her anus bothered his penis
 Some people blame Thabba
 But they do not blame his heart
 And it was his heart lusted
 And forced the body with his tail
 If he sees the stalk of a thing
 He loves the hardness of the stalk
 O best of men for himself 15
 And softest of men for riding
 O most deceiving of men as to ancestry
 In the most smelly graveyard dust
 And cheapest of men as to his mother
 She sells to a thousand lovers
 All of those on the make are arrows
 For Miriam and she is the quiver
 And it is nothing for one who has clap
 To arrange a meeting with doctors
 There is no difference between a drab 20
 And proper girl except a go-between
 O you who murder the guest
 His profit water-milk and water bags
 And for fear of every comrade
 Night stays with you beside him
 Thus you were created
 And who can overcome his Lord?
 And who cares about blame
 When he is accustomed to profit?
 But don't you see stallions in the palms 25
 Herd after herd of them?
 They roam among your women
 Inflamed with them for some time
 And they roundabout you watch
 And their cunts are wet
 And all the inflamed mules
 Show that they envy the herd

So put your heart at rest O Thabba
 Where can one leave off conceit?
 And if they betray you, by my life, 30
 For long they betrayed his friends
 Why should you desire it?
 For you already display fear
 You are nothing but a flea
 It ruins you as women's protector
 When you were snoring proudly
 You were farting out of fear
 And if we went off a little
 You started bearing spear and sword
 And you said: Would that in my hand 35
 Were reins of tall short-hair horse
 And if you knew my meaning
 You would discover your affliction
 And if you are ignorant of my meaning
 Then it is similar to yourself.

274 He spoke praising Dillar ibn Kashkrawaz who had just
 come to Kufa to fight the Kharajites who gathered
 there from the Banu Kilab. But the Kharaji dispersed
 before the arrival of Dillar at Kufa. (726)

As you claim, every one claims his reason sound
 Who knows the ignorance that is in him?
 You are the first to blame when there is reproof
 More in need of guilt than those who blame
 They say: There is no lover like you among men
 Find one like I love and you'll find my like
 A lover compares women to his thin sword
 The fineness of their bodies to the polish 5
 And brunettes to tawny lances except that for me
 Their prey is my dear, spears my messengers
 I lost a heart where virtue didn't stay a night
 Except as shining teeth and dark eyes
 A beauty does not forbid ambition by her parting
 Or win it by union with one who weeps her loss
 Let me take what no one yet has taken in rank
 Difficult heights are hard, the easy easy
 You would like one to get to the top cheaply
 But before the honey no way but bee's sting
 You warned us of death when horsemen clashed 10
 You did not know to what end they came
 For I am not a fool if I purchase my death
 With favors of Dillar ibn Kashkrawaz for me
 The dangerous lances are bitter between us
 We recall the Emir's sweet successes
 If I knew these things as cause of his being here
 My joy would grow as battles grow
 The two Iraq's land would never lack discord
 To call you here to expose fear and sterility

When the steel was dull in our blades we remained 15
 To draw your memory sharper than any edge
 We attack their forelocks with your name in battle
 More piercing than darts and than arrows
 And if it was after a battle that you came to us
 Yet your memory put the enemy to flight before
 I always treasured in my heart before our meeting
 The desire of the horse's hoofs for the road
 If you had not come to us we'd have come to you
 As exiles choose a horse over their family
 Many a fine horse who passes waste land and meadow 20
 Refuses his fodder until our pot is boiling
 So you see the favor of a visit is shared
 Yours double favor in intention and action
 He who follows the shower in search of provision
 Is not one to whose camp the shower comes
 I'm not one of those whose heart pretends love
 But busy with affairs to avoid a visit
 The Kilab intend to take over the government
 To whom have they left lambs and camels?
 Their Lord refused to leave beasts their wilds 25
 To make safe the abominable lizards they eat
 Dillar has led to them all the high war horses
 Palm fronds are topped by their prancing
 And his hand pounded the earth with every horse
 Whose hooves were without the iron shoes
 So they turned, wanting aid they left aid behind
 They sought with their feet what was in hand
 They feared loss of flocks but there was defeat
 They found out defeat is worse than loss
 They guided to us without intending it 30
 A generous nature who leads words with deeds
 He follows the tracks of war with bounty as
 Spear wounds are tended by a physician
 His sword and his gifts heal every complaint of
 The sick, even bereavement in a mother
 Modest, the sun melts at the beauty of his face
 If she came in love he'd withdraw to shade
 He is brave as if war were a lover of his
 If he visits she ransoms with horses and men
 Copiously watered his soul isn't thirsty for wine 35
 Thirsty, his hand cannot slake due to bounty
 Authority of Dillar and the greatness of his rank
 Are witness to Allah's unity and justice
 While Dillar exists he will brandish his sword
 No lion or his cubs show teeth in this world
 While Dillar exists his hand will be open
 No creature pretends to lawful generosity
 He is a youth, let not purity hope to be perfect
 In those not purifying their hands from greed
 May the Merciful not cut a root that brought him 40
 For I see that goodness comes of a good root.

AMIDIYYAT

275 And he spoke praising Abu Fadl Muhammad ibn Husain
ibn al Amidiyya when he met him at Arrajan. (732)

Your love is known whether you dissemble or not
Your weeping whether your tears flow or not
How many friends your patience and smiles deceived
When they saw you but within was the unseen
The heart commanded the tongue and the eyelids
To hide it but your body was enough to tell it
May Mahri camels stumble at dawn except for one
Like a picture wearing its painted silks
I envy him the paintings on his curtains; if I 5
Were them I'd hide until one appeared
May the hands never be poor who set them on it
Chosroes standing guard and Caesar too
Two guard a pair of eyes in one of the howdahs
That go, and my heart is the eye hollows
I had been warned of their departure before this
If it were useful for a doomed one to be wary
If able, when their scouts started to leave camp,
I'd have forbidden every cloud from dripping
For since cloud is brother to raven of parting 10
Its cry at their leaving produces rain
And then the camels cannot plod through a valley
Without splitting the green garment on it
They bear as it were gardens except they will
Capture hearts as wild cows and their young
By their glances they deny my weak hand its spear
And my little finger disowns my two rings
Time has given me what I do not accept as a gift
It planned for me but I wished for better
So to Arrajan O horse, for this is 15
My will which shatters spears to splinters
If I were to do what you want done
Your stars would not split the turbid dust
Take me to Abu Fadl who fulfills my vow
To come to the sea most filled with gems
Men judge in favor of his face and may I avoid
Unwilling to fulfill or falling short of it?
I have made a bracelet for whatever hand announces
Ibn Amid as for slave saying: Allah is great!
If his horses and his weapons do not rescue me 20
When shall I lead an army against the enemy?
By my father and mother, an orator! in his word
Is the price to buy hearts and sell them

One to whom war does not show anyone advancing
 Against him nor does anyone see him retreating
 He gelds the stallion warriors with his dye
 Saffron whatever they wear as armor
 The feeble reed in his hand earns
 Eminence and honor over the stone deaf spear
 And his fingers when they touch it make it show 25
 A coquette's pride and if it walks it swaggers
 One who when his letters reach a land
 Before the army, make an army turn in disorder
 You are the only one when you ride on a road
 And who goes behind when you ride on a lion?
 Men pluck the word at the time when it grows
 But you pluck the word when it flowers
 And it is accompanied by listeners if it goes
 And its beauty is doubled if it is repeated
 When you are silent the most eloquent speaker 30
 Is a pen that takes your fingers as a pulpit
 And letters of which the enemy cuts the envelope
 To read there spear shafts, points and armor
 Those who envy you call you chief and say no more
 But your Creator called you the great chief
 Your qualities are deputies to eyes for His words
 Like writing fills the ears of one who reads
 Have you seen the spirit of my camel in any camel
 Moving her front leg and hard hoof smoothly?
 She left the tamarisk smoke in her native land 35
 Seeking the people who burn ambergris
 Her knees pretended generosity by not kneeling
 Lest she fall where was no fragrant musk
 So she came to you with bleeding pads as if
 Her feet were shod with red carnelian
 She hurried to you ahead of time's hand
 She found it busy with both hands in thought
 Who will inform the Arabs that I after them
 Have witnessed Aristotle and Alexander?
 I tired of camel slaughter so I became a guest 40
 Of one killing gold purses for one he hosts
 And I heard Ptolemy explaining his books
 As a ruler, a bedouin and a city dweller
 And I met all the men of learning as if
 Allah brought back their souls and times
 They were set out for us in order from the start
 Then came summation as you came at last
 O would that the weeper whose tears grieve me
 Had looked at you as I looked to pardon me
 And she would see virtue not repelled by virtue 45
 The east sun rising and clouds as rivers
 I of all men have the best of places
 Happiest in my camel, most profitable in trade
 Zuhail, even though stars are his people, if he
 Were with you, would be in nobler company.

276 There was at 'the assembly of Ibn Amid an incense
burner filled with myrtle and narcissus which hid
its fire while the smoke came out of the opening
so Abu Tayyib spoke. (740)

Loveliest of things that the soul can love
And the sweetest that the nose can smell
The spreading of the incense is as if
Its coals were myrtle and narcissus
But we do not see the flame that stirs it
Does your continuous glory feed it?
For those who stand round about it
Have heads which envy their feet.

277 And he spoke congratulating him on the New Year and
praising him. (741)

The New Year comes and you are its purpose
Its fire stick bringing the fire it intends
This glance which it receives from you
Feeds it until its like in another year
It swerves from you, until the last day
You are its overseer, its eye and slumber
We in the land of Persia are happy
This dawn which we see is its birth
The kings of Persia magnify it until 5
All the days of the year envy it
We do not put on crowns for it until
The hills and the valleys wear them
Among them one does not compare Chosroes Abu
Sassan or his children with his rule
His language Arabic, his ideas from Greek
Philosophy, his manners are Persian
Each time one gift says: I am his bounty
A second says: This is his economy
How should my shoulder not touch the sky 10
When the sword belt on it is his belt?
His right hand girded me with a sword
His ancestors produced only one of it
Each time it unsheathes, lights beam from it
The sun thinks she is shining on it
They pictured it on the sheath for fear of
Losing it; the image's effect is its cover
It is not barefoot but shod with gold
It bears a sea whose crazing is the foam
It splits the armored warrior 15
Not yielding its edges until his saddle
Destiny has joined its edge and his hand
And my praise so its unique things gather
I have a necklace of beauty spots in his bounty
Its skin is precious with pock marks

His bounty's fast horses taught us horsemanship
 Left his saddle cloth and his hard riding
 They hoped for peace with us but did not see it
 The lands they traveled in were his lands
 Shall my excuse to the gallant Abu Fadl 20
 Be the offer of the black of my eye as his ink?
 I have become sick with the intensity of shame
 Generosities of one who caused it tended it
 Shortcoming in what I said of him was not equal
 To his rank until he praised it by criticism
 I have been a hunter of the falcon's mistress
 But the highest of the stars I cannot reach
 Often what the word cannot express about him
 Is what the heart conceals as its conviction
 I am not accustomed to see the like of Abu Fadl 25
 This that I come to him with is usual to him
 There is an excuse for one drowning in the waves!
 Plainly he should omit counting them
 Victory is in the bounty he spreads, but poetry
 Is my support and Ibn Amid supports that
 My thoughts gained experience but not nobility
 I have not his eloquence nor strength in me
 He wrongs bounty whenever riders descend with him
 He arranges that providers bring out a sea
 He overwhelms me and goodness wishes now 30
 That words were among things he ransoms
 I never heard of anyone who gave gifts
 And desired that among them was his heart
 Allah created him the most eloquent of all men
 Though a native Kurd he made himself an Arab
 Most worthy of the showers of praise for himself
 In times when all men are his grasshoppers
 As when the prophets appear in the world
 And a mission occurs when corruption spreads
 The brightness of the rising moon adorns 35
 The night then, and darkness does not harm it
 Thoughts are many as to how we shall be guided
 As his slaves are guided to their chief lord
 For that which we have of flocks and horses
 Is his as his gift and leading
 We are sending forty of the Mahri kind
 Each Mahri recited in its parade ground
 This number, may you live it, the body sees as
 Goal but does not see how it can be doubled
 So station them for the heart has trained them 40
 A station that excels that of fine horses.

278 And there came to Abu Tayyib a letter from Abu Fath
 Ibn Amid recalling his joy and love for him so he
 spoke impromptu. (750)

In the writing of men a letter has come
 Every hand ransoms the hand of the writer
 It tells of his relationship in respect to us
 And recalls what we found of his love
 It amazes its reader with what he sees
 And flashes lightning at faults he finds
 When mankind hear the words of it
 It creates envy in their hearts
 So I spoke and it devoured what I had said
 Like the lion who is son of a lion does.

279 And he spoke also bidding farewell to Ibn Amid at
 his journey to the land of Persia in the year 354.
 (750)

I forget but I do not forget parting reproaches
 Nor shame that increases the blush on cheeks
 Nor the night I found short within the tent
 While my hand was long on her neck and necklace
 What is wrong with me on a day I hate like this?
 At the farewell I will be close to distance
 Though loss is not particular in the least yet I
 Lost, but not my tears and my passion
 This is desire: the eager one enjoying his like 5
 Even if he hasn't a bit of wealth nor begs it
 Anger at destiny is like fire in the vitals
 But it is rage of a prisoner at his bonds
 If you see that I don't stay long in any land--
 Ruin of my sheath is unsheathing my edge
 On the day of jousting the lances fall near me
 I defend my honor and my courage enjoys it
 My days change as does my life and my dwelling
 Camels do not think about bad or good times
 Faces of the young men are veiled out of modesty 10
 They have no fear of the heat or the cold
 A modest face is not the nature of a wolf
 But rather it is the nature of the red lion
 If love doesn't authorize them in people's camp
 A spear is authority, fear better than love
 They avoid the weakness of kings for that which
 Abounds among the kings of bounty
 He who espouses the name of Ibn Amid Muhammad
 Can travel amid the fangs of snakes and lions
 He it is who changes swift poison to weakness 15
 And transforms their jaws into toothless gums
 By his blessing meadows suffice for camels
 They come to him hearing no guide but thunder
 They come across water that presents itself
 Sip with their lips at pools rimmed with roses
 As if earth intended our thanks be given him
 Nor do plains let us descend due to gifts

Our view that of ascetics in leaving all others
 In coming to him we seek content in rule
 What they hope for we hope for in all the gardens 20
 Of Arrajan so we do not despair of paradise
 The necks of the horses turn away from the guests
 With the turning of beasts fearful of the hunt
 They throw their forelocks at death in haste
 As watering grouse are deaf flying to water
 The actions of swords trace themselves
 To him though swords are traced to India
 When distinguished noblemen come in his service
 Their lineage is higher than father or mother
 A hero whose eyes destroy the hostility of men 25
 Much sickness cannot make sick his eyes
 He differs from them in nature, character, rank
 He is too great to hate though he may do so
 He changes the color of the night for the enemy
 With panoply of flags for conquering soldiers
 When they watch for dawn they see before light
 Cavalry rushing forward as dawn cannot rush
 Scattering they cannot guard against the rising
 Nor watch for them in hollows or heights
 They are loaded when they return from the melee 30
 With much booty for slaves apart from men
 Every land stirs up dirt for his dust clouds
 They are like the stripes on a burdah
 If there is a Mahdi whose guidance one foretells
 He is it; if not, he is guided and no Mahdi
 These times make us sick with such a promise
 And deceive one in whose hand is the cash
 Is not the best thing a good which is not hidden
 Or if guidance is hid then it is not guided
 O keenest intelligence and most generous in gifts 35
 Bravest in heart, most merciful in bowels
 With the finest turban whether seated or riding
 Whether on a great horse or the high pulpit
 Days were most gracious in bringing us together
 While we praised we could go on with praise
 They made a single farewell in threefold form
 Your beauty, your known wisdom and your glory
 I have attained a reward except that I am
 Ashamed for my people I attained it alone
 Everyone who shares in the morning of my joy 40
 Knows one will not see the like of it again
 So be generous from the heart since I go, for I
 Leave my heart to one whose virtue is in me
 Even if my body were to leave its life with you
 I say it happened without blame to the bond.

ADUDIYYAT

280 And he spoke praising Abu Shuja Adud al Daula
Fennachosroe. (758)

O pain! the exchange for my word, O wonder!
For one who goes and the price is her memory
I suffer who never saw her beauties
Wonder's root and pain's was sight of her
A beauty who as long as I was alone with her
Saw her visage in my vision
She kissed my eyes and she cheated me
For she kissed her own mouth in that
Would that she would continue to find refuge 5
And may he continue to give shelter
All of the wounded whose peace was hoped for
She astounded with her eyes but for one heart
Each time she smiled my cheeks grew wet
With a rain whose lightning was her teeth
She was one to shake her braids into my hand
I put their spices into the wine
In a land where the veil is required
For beauties, they cannot be compared to her
They met us and the camels were on the move 10
And they were pearls whose water dripped
It was as if all the wild cows
Were saying: You should beware and they too!
For them there are those whose swords drop blood
When the tongue of a lover names her
I love the land between Homs and Khunasary
Everyone loves those that live there
Where her cheeks and the apples of Lubnan met
And my teeth over the Houmai wine
I have spent summers there in desert heat 15
I spent winters on plains that were cold
If the meadows had shrubs we grazed them
If a settlement was noticed we raided it
Or if wild asses came up like a wandering cloud
We chased their leaders with fast horses
Or if a herd of camels crossed they were left
To wander hamstrung among the drinkers
And the horsemen pursued and were pursued
Running with long lance and with short
Their killing surprised the mailed warriors, but 20
They never looked at killing after this
And I observed kings by the dozens
And traveled until I saw their masters

And those whose fates were in their hands
 To command them for themselves or to forbid
 Abu Shuja of Persia Adud al Daula
 Fennachosroe Shahinshah
 I name them not to increase their fame
 But rather for pleasure as we recall them
 You bring the benefits of words to us 25
 As those esteemed bring their reverence
 He is most glorious to whom his gifts come
 Most precious in his wealth and rank
 If his horses could know of his giving he would
 Not like them to see him content with them
 Wine has no part in his generosity
 If he feels dizzy he repays it
 Wine only accompanies his bounteous moods
 But wine falls short of the lowest of them
 His diversions rejoice his singing girls 30
 And then he brings their joy to an end
 Each of these girls makes lament when given
 Breaking the strings and the lute itself
 They float like motes in the foam
 Of bounty of the Emir's hand that flows
 His crown shines on his forehead
 As his words make a dawn of its meanings
 Their east and their west submit to him
 He himself thinks little of their world
 The desires gather in his heart 35
 One of them would fill the heart of the times
 And if its joy would come in times more
 Spacious than these it would last forever
 And the opposed armies would become one
 And the living would stumble over the dead
 The two opposed fires would turn in the heaven
 Its moons prostrate before their splendor
 Horseman who protects with himself as armor
 Battle praises him as do their horsemen
 If his hand were to disown itself out of modesty 40
 In war, we would know its tracks
 And how should that which is its whip be hid
 And the sting of death and some of its marks?
 There is reason for his excuse if he is proud
 Of the world and its sons and kills them
 If the universe denied his favors
 He himself would not go against his nature
 Like the sun they do not ask from what they do
 Any profit for themselves nor any pay
 Let sultans administer what you entrust to them 45
 And take refuge with him who is their opposer
 But do not deceive yourself that the command
 Is another Emir's even if it boasts of it
 For indeed kingship is lord of a kingdom
 Whose perfume pervades from east to west
 He smiles though his face may be darkened
 The enemy's peace is for him like their war

Men are like servants of the heathen gods
 His servants are like those unified by Allah.

281 And he spoke praising him and commemorating his journey to him through the Sha'ab Bewan. (766)

Valley of Sha'ab, sweetest among valleys
 As the time of spring among the seasons
 Even though an Arab youth is here
 A stranger in face and hand and tongue
 A playground of the jinns, and if Solomon were
 To travel here he would need an interpreter
 It seems so good to our horsemen and their horses
 That I fear they will be inclined to rest here
 We start at dawn with the branches dropping 5
 The like of seed pearls on their forelocks
 I traveled on as they veiled the sun from me
 Bringing me enough of the rays of light
 The east threw some of them on my clothes
 Like dinars that flee from the fingers
 They had fruits that told you what they held
 By way of drink ready without any cups
 And waters that rustled there over pebbles
 With purl of bracelets on singing girls' hands
 If it was Damascus my reins would be turned back 10
 By one skilled in tharid in Chinese bowls
 There is aloes wood piled up for the guests
 With that the fires are spicy as they smoke
 One stops there with the heart of a hero
 And departs from there with a coward's heart
 It is a home from which the ghost did not depart
 That accompanied me to Naubandjan
 And when the gray doves sing here
 The songs of the singing girls responded
 Those in the valley have greater need than doves 15
 For clarity when they sing and lament
 The two descriptions approach each other nearly
 But the two described are very far apart
 In Sha'ab Bewan my horse said:
 Do we have to leave here for the jousting?
 Your father Adam set the pattern of disobedience
 And taught you how to depart from gardens.
 And then I said: When I saw Abu Shuja
 I was consoled for the world and this place
 For men and the world are a highway 20
 To the one who has no second in the creation
 I taught myself to speak about them
 Like learning jousting without a spear
 By Adud al Daula they are defended and honored
 There are no hands where there is no forearm
 Nor any grip on the cutting sword
 Nor joy in the brown flexible lance

They name him the refuge of their members
 On the day of a virgin war or an old one
 No one is named with a name like Fennachosroe 25
 Nor nicknamed like Fennachosroe
 His virtues are not understood by thinking
 Nor by tales about him or by eyewitness
 The lands of men are dust and fear
 The land of Abu Shuja is safety
 He protects every merchant from thieves
 And guarantees to the sword every criminal
 When their cargoes require a safeguard
 They are defended on plain and mountain
 They spend the night without associates 30
 Crying to those who pass: Do you see me?
 His magic is every Mashrafi sword
 Against every deaf basilisk and snake
 Yet his great wealth is not charmed from bounty
 Nor his generous flocks against contempt
 A hero defends the boundaries of Persia
 Urging survival with the help of destruction
 With a blow that stirs the feelings of fate
 No striking second and third lute strings
 As if skulls' blood among scattered hair 35
 Dressed lands with feathers of grouse
 So if the hearts of lovers were driven there
 They would not fear glances of lovely women
 I had not seen before him two lion cubs
 Like his cubs nor yet two Mahri racers
 More violent in contending for a noble stock
 More like in appearance to pure blooded father
 Nor more frequent in the assembly listening to:
 Such a one broke a spear in such a one.
 The first vision they saw was the heights 40
 They were attached to them before their time
 The first words they understood or spoke were:
 Rescue to suppliant! or Freedom to captive!
 You were the sun dazzling every eye
 But how now since two others have appeared?
 May they live the life of sun and moon to revive
 Each other by their light and be envious
 May they not rule except kingdoms of the enemy
 And not inherit except what they fight for
 May the two sons of any enemy increase for him 45
 With the two ya letters of little men
 A prayer like praise without hypocrisy
 The heart brings it to the heart
 You appear in it like the temper
 Of a Yemeni sword which it becomes in you
 Except for your existence among men they would be
 Nonsense like words without meaning.

The rose is true to that which it asserts:
 That you make this scattering shower
 Whenever he mingles the wind with it
 A sea holds as if in its water a red fruit
 The prosaist of swords scatters blood
 And every word that he speaks is wisdom
 And horses with estates interspersed between
 And perfect flocks and revenge
 The rose shows us, if one complains of his gift,
 A finer thing than it in his bounty's peace
 Tell it: You are not the best that he scatters
 Indeed generosity has taken refuge with you
 For fear of evil eye lest it be overcome
 Blindness strike an eye with what it sends.

283 And he spoke also praising him and the news had just
 arrived concerning the rout of Wahsudan the Kurd.
 (775)

Be a third with us, O tell of the abandoned camp
 We weep and the camel groans beneath us
 Or do not, for it is no blame for a tell
 Indeed tells have their own kind of action
 If you could speak you would say by way of excuse:
 My trouble is not yours O man
 I would weep for you as one who suffers
 But I do not weep for I am one they ruined
 They were the ones to saddle up while I stayed 5
 The days of their camping have elapsed
 The beauty travels every time they settle
 And settles with them wherever they do
 In my eyes there is a gazelle that governs them
 A bedouin, the people are charmed by her
 The food complains of her long absence
 And her inaccessibility, but who can hold her?
 What she leaves in the bottom of the milk cup
 She leaves as musk and honey.
 She said: Are you not well? I said to her: 10
 You have taught me that love is drunkenness
 If Fennachosroe were to overtake you at dawn
 And you came alone, wooing would be hard
 His horsemen would stand off from you
 For beauty is clever at killing
 You are doing nothing and your guest
 Is a king of kings and such as you are stingy
 Will you refuse him hospitality and insult him
 Or be lavish with him in what he asks?
 No, it is not right in what is proper for him 15
 This stinginess, nor this bad temper or fear
 He is a king who when the lance reaches him
 It bends, we think of him and it straightens

If those before him were not weak in respect to
 What they ruled they were lax compared to him
 Then the one who has knowledge came to the world
 And plains and mountains came with pleas
 Complaint of the sick to one who is their surety
 If sickness might not pass from a body
 They say: May your bravery not deceive you 20
 Go on for your soul has no limits set to it
 He is the ideal if a proverb is current
 Or if asked on battle day: Who is the hero?
 Numerous troops of clients come to him
 Without any gear except hobbles and clogs
 For the hobbles are used for the horses
 And the clogs are busy with Bactrian camels
 They say good evening with hands full of gifts
 As those, or what is left, or the cash
 Men excite desire for a shower from his hand 25
 Spear shafts grow too by yearning for him
 A shower which generosity lengthens for him
 And glory not mere trefoil and water lilies
 It flows to the rocks of earth and stays there
 To shorten the teeth of men with lapping it
 And if their front teeth were not worn down so
 For whom would kisses be saved and stored?
 In his face from the light of Creator is
 Power which is from miracles and prophets
 And when the hearts reject his judgments 30
 Heads will enjoy the decrees of his swords
 And when the battalions refuse to submit to him
 They submit to him by means of pliant lances
 Wahsudan are you content with judgment they gave
 Or think to increase bereavement of mothers?
 They came to your country, those unsheathed ones
 It was as if flames were between the lances
 The men had narrowed their eyes to slits
 And horses looked askance with their eyes
 They came to you and no power was in their coming 35
 And no break between them and those afar
 Those at Rayy did not know whether they had
 Decamped or if they returned to camp
 You came with determination but not as a lion
 You left in flight and not as a mountain goat
 You gave them their weapons and their hands
 And something that no eye could take in
 Most generous of kings at handing over kingdoms
 One who almost handed over his head too
 Except for ignorance you would not have shuffled 40
 Toward people who drown you if they spit
 They did not approach secretly nor conquer
 By deceit, nor were they aided by treachery
 His experience met no better horsemen than you
 Except when the cunning was put to the test
 No one need feel shame if it is said to him:
 The house of Buyyî strove with you or won

Power, pardon, promise, bounty, request
 Wealthy, elevated, eminent, ruling, just
 Above the heavens and above what they seek 45
 When they aim at a goal they stoop to it
 Their noble acts cut as if they were their swords
 And when traitors make excuse they accept it
 They do not make a show against their opponents
 With sword when reproof can take its place
 For Abu Ali is the one who has the victories
 And Abu Shuja is the one who has perfection
 This one's best blessing was sworn to that one
 In the cradle: May hope never leave them.

284 And he spoke consoling Abu Shuja Adud al Daula for
 his aunt. (781)

May it be the last that the king is consoled for
 This which has been imprinted on his heart
 Not with fear but with rage since he suspects
 That fate has got power over him by violence
 If the world knew what troubles he had
 The days would be ashamed of their censure
 Perhaps they think that one who is
 Not at home with him is not of his family
 And that one who has a house at Bagdad 5
 Is not within the scope of his sword
 That only ancestors of a man are his home land
 One who is not in it is not of his loins
 I fear that his enemies will start thinking
 And hurry out of fear to his side
 There is no escape for mankind from that couch
 No turning that bed upside down at one's side
 There one forgets what his pleasure was
 And death has no taste of its agony
 We are sons of death so why should it bother us? 10
 We loathe what we cannot escape drinking
 Our hands are greedy for our souls
 As rivals to time but they are his property
 For these souls are of air
 And these bodies are of dust
 If the lover thought about the end of beauty
 That enslaves him he would not be enslaved
 The horn of the sun is not seen in the east
 But souls complain of its setting
 The keeper of the sheep dies in his ignorance 15
 The death of Galen with all his medicine
 And often he outlives him
 And is more secure in his mind
 The end of one who excels in peace
 Is like the end of one who excels in war
 May the seeker not attain his end
 Whose heart is fluttered by his fears

I ask Allah's pardon for the soul that is gone
 Its bounty cancels out its sins
 Telling over the good deeds was as if 20
 The lavish bounty was curse on it
 It wanted its life from the love of high things
 But it did not want life from love of itself
 The grave digger thought that it was alone
 But its glory was its companion in the grave
 Manliness was manifest in its memory
 The femininity was hid under the veil
 Father's sister of the best of Emirs who called
 And said: Warriors to arms! and they answered
 O Adud al Daula whose support is 25
 His father, and the heart is the mind's father
 Those who are his sons are his father's ornaments
 As if they were flowers on his stalk
 An honor to the age of whose people you are one
 As nobility you appeared as one of its sons
 Grief is a conquered hero, may he not revive
 Your sword was courageous, may it not be dull
 It would seem to me that the moon in the dark sky
 Should not let one star lost make him desolate
 Beware of weakening under the burden of whatever 30
 Another brings you in his letters
 Indeed you have borne heavy burdens before this
 No need in extremity for you to drag them
 The courage of a man leads him to praise
 And fear leads only to calamity
 Such as you turn back grief in its attack
 And drive back the tears from their fall
 Truly permanence depends on virtue
 Truly submission is to one's Lord
 I should not say "such as you" but mean rather 35
 Except for you, O unique one without compare.

285 And he spoke also praising him and commemorating the
 rout of Wahsudan. (786)

Are you a visitor O dream, or a nurse
 Or does one who sent you think I am asleep?
 It's not as they think; a faint overtook me
 And you came seeking me in the interval
 Come back, restore it; what a wonderful dying!
 My breast pressed to her swelling breasts
 And be generous with what he was stingy of
 With the wide spaced, handsome, cool teeth
 When his dreams circle about us 5
 I laugh at him since I praise him
 And he said: If he could fulfill his need with
 Us he would not bother to increase his love
 I do not deny a favor which it perhaps has done
 Something accomplished or even promised

Eye cannot tell parting between the two of them
 The union with dreams is only exhaustion
 O soft hand filled with happiness
 On a swift camel with a necklace
 If you do evil to my heart I will return love 10
 The most ignorant of men is a lover who hates
 You have told O night of her long loose hair
 So tell of her absence to my wakeful eyelids
 My weeping has been long at the memory of her
 You too are long until both of you seem one
 What is the matter with these wandering stars?
 It is as if they were blind and had no leader
 Or like the mob of kings on one side
 Abu Shuja alone over against them
 If they flee he will reach them and if they stand 15
 They fear loss of their gains and inheritance
 They hope for powerful forgiveness of one
 Whose face is blessed with generous glory
 He is serene and if a dove take refuge with him
 She does not fear the archer nor the trapper
 If the wild beasts are grazing they think of him
 So no hunter or fowler can scare them
 Every hour news is brought to him
 Of armies destroyed by his swords
 Or covered with blood the camels swiftly 20
 Bring him the heads with the crowns attached
 O forearm whose lord is himself a forearm
 Traveling by night you awaken the red grouse
 Rain cloud of death and life at the same time
 But you are not lightning nor thunder
 You took but did not accept from Wahsudan's
 Injuries what his corrupt mind received
 He began with his tricks as a goal
 But war is the goal of the trickster
 What is there for one who comes to you with war? 25
 He blames the choice even if a troop comes
 Without weapons except hope in you
 So he wins by aid and flees with guidance
 Fate strikes the one who strikes at you
 Whether in the position of ruler or ruled
 You gave two days to his armies' destruction
 But you were not the victor nor the witness
 Absent he did not hide for his vicars were
 His father's army and his ancestors' rank
 All of the Khatti straight ones too 30
 Giants shake them on giant beasts
 Blood shedders that do not call for distinctions
 Between fresh blood and the stinking corpse
 When death appears then I call to it:
 Change the nun for a dal in Had, death.
 When a horse knows who it is attacking then
 He falls down prostrate to his authority
 Tirm was so enveloped in dust
 That camels seeking it would be lost

One asks people of the fortress about the king 35
 But he had changed to a wandering ostrich
 The land is waste lest he get too close to it
 And all of it groans ungratefully at him
 There is no fortress or building for protection
 Nor can building enrich nor a builder
 So rage at these people O Wahsudan they were not
 Made except for the enemy's rage and envy
 They look at you only to test you a bite to eat
 Before their people return with provisions 40
 Abandon that robe for one who is worthy of it
 Not everyone worships whose forehead bleeds
 If the Emir had not been in command when you
 Met him he'd have given success to a deputy
 The dawn shook him when he did not see with him
 The victory messenger as if he were bereaved
 But the event is Allah's; many a striver
 Would not lose except that he strives
 Many a cautious one when the arrows are flying
 Flees a weak arrow to one that pierces 45
 The killer does not care whether the enemy
 Who receives it is standing or sitting
 May the praise I have fashioned have as ransom
 The man described in it and so be immortal
 I have twisted a bracelet for the forearm
 Of the state whose support is his father.

286 And he spoke praising Adud al Dawla and commemorating
 the hunt at the place known as Dasht Arzan. (792)

How natural for the days and my nights that
 They say: What's wrong with him and with us?
 Not that this is my way of talking, a youth
 Who has undergone the double fires of war
 Drinking from them and bathing in them
 Nor did whoring touch me in my heart
 And if the armorer were to tug at my skirt
 Offering me two kinds of garments 5
 I'd not name coat of mail but rather greaves
 And why not since there is my guide
 The rider of Majruh and Shamal
 Abu Shuja the conqueror of warriors
 The wine bearer of the cup of death and blood
 As he routed the Qufs on flight's evening
 He beat down the Kurds in battle until they
 Defended themselves with flight and retreat
 A destroyer who brought defeat and deportation
 And hunting down horsemen with the lance
 And with new made polished heirlooms 10
 He goes to chase beasts in the mountains
 And in the soft places of meadow and sands
 On the blood of men and their limbs

Apart from the troop on the young horse
 Out of greatness of spirit not weariness
 Out of restraint not desire for substitutes
 They make no commotion except for moving on
 For they have been beaten for neighing
 Every rider on them is sick with awe
 Their mouths are held out of fear of a cough 15
 From the rising of the sun to its setting
 Whatever flies with swiftest wind cannot escape
 And whatever runs disappears into thickets
 Nor is there protection in the waters or lakes
 For flesh either forbidden or permitted
 Truly souls are prepared for death
 May it pour down on the length of Dasht Arzan
 Between the wide prairies and the woods
 The pathways of boars and lions
 The piglets are close to the cubs 20
 The bear towers over the gazelles
 Uniting the opposites and the shapes
 As if Fennachosroe most perfect in virtue
 Feared that they would lack completeness
 So he brought elephants and their riders
 The mountain goats are hobbled with rope
 Submissive to the lassoes of men and horses
 Walking the gait of sheep and camels
 Turbaned with the dried out roots
 They are born beneath the heaviest of burdens 25
 When they turn to look at their shadows
 They show themselves to be the ugliest of shapes
 As if they were born for baseness
 Increasing the shame of ignorance
 Members not useful in any case
 To the rest of the body a defect
 The buck of the antelope lives higher
 Horns bent back like a bow of yew
 With the point of the tip on the flanks 30
 They almost pierce the haunches
 They have a black beard without a mustache
 It is good for a laugh but not for reverence
 Its growth is all thickened with spittle
 Not anointed with musk or unguent
 It is content with oil and urine
 And with piercing spice and manure
 If fixed to the cheeks of a deceiver
 He makes it serve as a net for wealth
 Between evil judgments and children 35
 With a pretense that the back is the front
 It does not show the face from the rear
 So they are left to a downpour of arrows
 From mountain's bottom and the heights
 The bows of the men have bid them farewell
 In every liver the weight of an arrow head
 And so they plummet from the peaks
 Upside down the hoofs and bounding

Leaping through the air on their backs
 On the fastest way down to the depths
 They sleep there the sleep of the lazy 40
 On their necks they hurried the fastest
 They don't complain of weariness
 Nor do they take care about going astray
 There was a reason for the departure from them
 The desire of the much for the little
 The wild beasts of the upland grieved due to it
 They were frightened in Selma and Qabal
 With the fear of lizards and iguanas
 And dust colored ostriches and their chicks
 The fawns and the wild cows and buffalo 45
 They listen for his delightful news
 But the dumb beasts can't send to ask
 Their barren and foals, camels with their young
 That he would send them a governor
 So he might rule them with bridle and saddle
 To make them safe from such terror
 And not make anxiety and share out the pasturage
 And the water of every downpour that flows
 O power of those who travel and return 50
 If you wished you could hunt lions with foxes
 Or if you wished to drown the enemy with mirages
 Or put in place of weapons of war
 Pearls, you could kill with joy
 Nothing remains but to hunt down the goblins
 In the dark of the absent moon
 On the backs of camels not needing water
 You would reach the top of your hopes
 You leave nothing there except the impossible 55
 That exists nowhere and is not obtainable
 O forearm of the state and of the heights
 The lineage is gems and you are the owner
 Of a father and not of earrings and bracelets
 A jewel to adorn with beauty from yourself
 Many an ugly one is heavily bejeweled
 Finer than hers is beauty of unadorned
 The honor of a young man is in himself and acts
 Of those before him of mother and father.

287 He spoke bidding farewell to Adud al Dawla and this
 was the last which he spoke and his soul flew away
 from its place. (800)

He ransoms you who falls short of your measure
 There are no kings but those who ransom you
 If we said: Your ransom is one equal to you
 We'd ask for support of those who hate you
 We'd make safe from being your ransom every soul
 Even if it is chief support of your kingdom

Or he who thinks the scattering of corn is bounty
 But sets up traps under what he scatters
 Or he who grovels in the dirt and sleeps in it 5
 Though the rank he attained touched the sky
 And even if their hearts were faithful
 Yet their characters would be your enemy
 Since you hate a worldly esteem that is thin
 When you see that its property is fat
 I am about to go and you put a seal on my heart
 With your love lest other than you come there
 And you have loaded me with thanks large
 And heavy so that I can scarcely move with it
 I am afraid that it will be hard on the animals 10
 They cannot go with us without staggering
 Perhaps Allah will make this departure so
 It helps us remain under your protection
 If I were able I would lower my eyes
 And not look anywhere until I see you
 Can patience exist apart from you if your broad
 Bounty contents me but does not content you?
 Will you leave me with the sun's eye as my shoe
 So that my walking in it cuts the shoelace?
 I see how I grieve and we have not yet gone far 15
 And how will the journey be when it proceeds?
 This passion before departure is like a sword
 And here am I not yet hit, but I am marked
 As time for good-by confronted us my heart said:
 You keep quiet, don't let your mouth run on.
 And if it weren't that the most that you desire
 Was return, I'd say: May you not get your way.
 You healed me from sickness with sickness
 And what healed killed while you were sick
 So I veiled from you our secret talk and I hid 20
 The desires which I have long been fighting
 When I rebelled against them they were strong
 And if I submitted to them they were weak
 To many a one this side of Thawiya in grief
 My approach will say: This for that.
 Many a one with sweet saliva when the camels kneel
 Will kiss saddle and saddle cloth of Turwak
 He is forbidden to touch perfume after I am gone
 And the scent does cling and linger
 And he refuses his lips to every lover 25
 But gives it to the bashama and arak
 Sleep was talking to his eyes about me
 Would that sleep would tell of your bounty
 About Bactrians that do not reach Iraq except
 They grow thin, once strong, and fleshy
 I am content for his eyes to dream
 And when he awakes that he think it a lie
 Nor anything but that he listen and I tell--
 May he not be enslaved with love of you
 How much joy for the listener who does not know 30
 Whether to marvel at my praise or your rank

And that perfume, your honor, is musk
 And this poetry is my pestle and mortar
 But do not praise them but praise a hero
 Who if his eulogist name him not means you
 Most noble, his qualities are from his father
 Tomorrow your sons meet your father in them
 Among friends there is one marked with love
 Others claim to share with him
 When tears on cheeks are compared to each other 35
 It is clear who weeps and who pretends to weep
 The virtues of Abu Shuja condemn
 The latter, for my eyes which are afar
 So distance, move from front feet of my camels
 They have spear points' impact in your sides
 Whatever you wish O highway let it be
 Suffering or escape or destruction
 If we travel while Tishrin has yet five days
 They will see me before they see the Fish
 The favor of Fennachosroe will drive off from me 40
 Enemy spears and thrusts on the journey
 I wear by his good pleasure on my road
 Armor that bristles so it frightens heroes
 Who will substitute for you when we have parted
 When all men are false except you?
 I am nothing but an arrow in air; it returns
 When it finds nothing to hold to there
 Ashamed that my Allah should see me when
 I left your house and he has chosen you.

NOTES

Poem 1. The term Shawmiyyat uses the same root letters as a verb which means to bring bad luck. Poems which are preceded by the words: He spoke in his youth, were probably composed from the poet's tenth to fifteenth year.

2. The poet's father, who accompanied him in his early journeys; died when he was about 17 years old.

3. Kufa, where the poet spent his boyhood, was a stronghold of the Shi'ite branch of Islam. The man who is eulogized in this poem traced his ancestry to Ali, the head of the Shi'ites and son-in-law of the prophet Muhammad. The patron was a rich inhabitant of Bagdad where the poet had gone after his early two year stay in the Syrian desert and return to Kufa. The poet at the time was about fifteen years old. This poem is in the form of the classical qasida. Line 22, Quraish is the Meccan tribe to which the prophet's ancestors belonged. Line 24, an ancestor of the prophet.

4. Long hair braided and unbraided is bedouin style. Between the ages of ten and fourteen the poet spent two years in the desert with a bedouin tribe. Since his father was a poor water carrier the change from city to country life would not have been extreme. It was thought that the language and life style of the bedouin was purer than that of the city people. A Carmathian sack of Kufa in 312 A.H. may have driven the poet's family to the desert.

5. A qadi is a Muslim magistrate. The opponents of the Shi'ites were the Sunni who made much of legal authority. Line 3, an additional meaning for dhahabi is refuse.

6. This man is said to be a certain Abu Fadl who patronized the poet after his return from the desert to Kufa. He is said to have led the poet astray with his knowledge of Greek philosophy, particularly that of Aristotle. Line 19, the poet's mother died very early and he was brought up by his grandmother.

8. and 9. These poems and others later reflect the intransigent attitude of violence that led to the turmoil created in Islamic society by the Carmathians. Their communist and anarchist ideas would have been well known to the poet.

10. This patron lived in Manbij in Syria about 50 miles west of Aleppo. The Kilab was a major Arab tribe as the Tamim were a confederation of tribes. Other tribal names are also mentioned in the poem. The patron's name is given by Blachère in his Un poète arabe du IVe siècle de

1'Hegire (Xe siècle de J.-C.): Abou-t-Tayyib al-Motanabbî, 1935, as Sa'id ibn al Abbas, prefect of Manbij. He had two sons who were to become governors of Aleppo. Line 11, Zuhā is the planet Saturn.

11. Blachère thinks this contains a part of a poem intended for Abu Abbas Ahmad ibn Kaigalag, governor of Aleppo. A relative of his is the subject of a satire in poem 140. Line 4 is addressed to the lover's companion. Arabic poetry often shifts the person referred to from one verse to the next. Line 12 is addressed to the mistress and line 16 to the saki or wine bearer. Dar Athla in line 3 is near Kufa. Nakhla in line 18 is near Ba'albek. Line 33, a characteristic letter of the Arabic alphabet. Salih in line 36 is mentioned in the Koran as a prophet rejected by the Thamud tribe.

12. and 13. This patron lived in Tripoli, a port city now situated in Lebanon. He was also the patron to whom poem 40 was dedicated. Line 2, Hatim was a proverbially rich and generous Arab. Line 3, Abu Qasim means father of generosity.

14. Blachère suggests that this and other passages point to the lack of success which the teen-age prodigy found with some patrons.

15. This man may be, according to Blachère, a local celebrity of the Roda, a clan of the Tai tribe, situated near Manbij in north Syria.

16. This patron Blachère also locates in Manbij. Khorasan is in Persia and may indicate the origin of the man.

17. The Tanukhi were a south Arabian tribe many families of which settled near Latakia, a port city of Syria. The poet felt that his own ancestors had come from Yemen in South Arabia whose glorious cultural past was balanced against that of the north Arabs. Qudha is a clan. Khindif was a feminine ancestor of the south Arabs.

18. See the note to poem 31. Line 4, the constellation of Arcturus.

19. This poem in lines 22-23 contains allusions to the Carmathian Grand Master with whose violent attacks on the social structure the poet sympathizes.

20. This poem suggests an attempt on the part of a friend to restrain the poet's growing revolutionary tendencies.

21. The Sera is a tributary of the Forat or Euphrates.

26. Blachère thinks that the Ad bedouin mentioned in line 3 were involved in the poet's attempt to stir up rebellion against the authorities. The Ad inhabited the Samawa desert which stretches between Latakia and the Euphrates and where the poet spent his early desert years. Line 25, tribes beaten by the patron's men. Line 35 is not in some texts. Al Wahidi's text has a few other such variations.

27. This man according to Blachère was the son of the patron to whom poem 15 was dedicated. Line 13 mentions an eponymous ancestor of the Arabs from the time of Noah. Line 29, a clan of the Tai. Wa'il is another clan.

28. The same patron as in the previous poem. Line 35,

- the patron's clan. Line 36, Arabian mountains.
29. This was a jailer who befriended the poet during his stay in prison which began in 322 when he was 19 and lasted for two years.
30. Blachère gives the name of the authority as Ishaq ibn Kaigalag. See poem 140. Line 14, Badr al Karchani was appointed governor of Aleppo by the Caliph al Radi. He was driven out by the Ikshid of Egypt who gave the city to Ibn Kaigalag.
31. An anecdote relates that the poet told this man he was a prophet come to redress the evils of the times. He said that he had a new Koran of 114 chapters and could control the rains. This latter detail may be referred to in poem 18. The anecdote is one of the sources for the poet's title of al Mutanabbi which means the would-be-prophet.
32. Evidently the poet had to suffer remarks as to his origins.
36. Farqad: two stars near the pole.
39. Khortum, a wine. The word has the meaning of snout.
40. See note to poems 12 and 13.
42. Blachère says the poet received only 20 dirhams for this poem. A dirham is a small silver coin and would represent very poor payment in the poet's day. For another poem he received only one dinar, a gold coin. This patron is said to have been a cavalry commander. Line 17, Dhu'l Qarnain is mentioned in the Koran. He may be Alexander the Great. The commentators are scandalized by the lines that follow. Line 23, Iblis, Satan.
44. This patron resided in Manbij. He is thought to be a descendant of the famous poet al Buhturi who was one of al Mutanabbi's best loved models along with Abu Tammam. Line 12, Qahtan is the Biblical Joktan.
46. Line 12, eponymous heroes of the ancient Arabs.
47. This patron was the captain in the pay of the Ikshid of Egypt who in 330 seized Aleppo from the forces of the Caliph. His name shows that he was of Byzantine origin.
48. Line 3, Yazdath was governor of Aleppo when Masawar seized it from the Caliph. Line 12, agricultural towns in Iraq.
49. See note to poem 17. The dead man was a resident in Latakia. Line 5, Radwa is a hill near Mecca which pilgrims visit. Line 21, two angels of the last judgment.
51. This man was a brother of the man mourned in poem 49. He was governor of Latakia for a time. Line 6, Mahris are fine horses.
52. Line 10, Suhail, a star.
53. Line 6, Qarqarfa, a wine. Line 9, Rudaini, spears. Suraiji, swords.
54. This man was a cousin of the patron of poem 51.
55. Line 3, al Khidr, the Green One, is mentioned in the Koran. He figures in mystical literature such as that by Ibn Arabi.
56. According to Blachère this poem was composed when

- the Emir was suppressing the rebellion of the Banu Qasib in the vicinity of Latakia in 319 when the poet was 16.
- Line 4, Khatti, a synonym for fine spears.
57. The same man as in poem 54. Line 13, Thubair, mountain in Arabia. Line 33, place name referring to South Arabia.
58. Line 22, Mahatta, the patron's clan. Line 33, Buhaira is the lake of Tiberias. The Ikshid Muhammad Tughj had entertained the poet there. The Gaur is the valley of the Jordan.
59. This and the following poem is dedicated to a man resident in Antioch.
60. Line 24, famous lovers celebrated in a well known series of poems.
61. The Malikite system of jurisprudence was one of several accepted interpretations of Koranic justice.
62. A hajib was the chamberlin of an Emir. Line 14, Dijla, the Tigris.
63. The Rum are the Romans or Byzantine Greeks.
64. A katib was a secretary. Line 35, rajul, Arabic for leg or man.
65. Blachere says Qansarin is the place where the poet was arrested before his trial and imprisonment.
67. This patron had played a role in the trial of the unfortunate mystic al Hallaj in Bagdad some years before. A.J. Arberry in Poems of al Mutanabbi, 1967, says that Auraji implies that he was a clerk in a revenue office.
- Line 11, thoroughbred camels.
68. This hunting piece is in the style made famous by Abu Nuwas, the Bagdad poet of the times of Harun al Rashid. Line 2, herbs.
69. This and the following poems were composed during a stay of more than a year with the governor of Tiberias. He was mentioned in poem 30 as the dispossessed governor of Aleppo.
71. Badr was the lieutenant of Ibn Ra'iq who succeeded in driving the Ikshid from Syria as the leader of the Caliph's forces there. Al Muttai was the ruling caliph at the time. Line 17, Badr is Arabic for full moon. Line 30, Thurya are the Pleiades.
76. This qasida in lines 40ff. alludes to jealousy of the poet's position with the Emir who eventually turned against him.
89. This series of poems, like others that precede, have an important role in the structure of the Diwan.
97. This patron was the poet's refuge from the displeasure of Badr. He lived at Jerash in the valley of the Jordan. He seems to have been a reader of the Koran. Line 10, Hijaz and Nejd are in central and western Arabia.
98. and 99. These poems describe the poet's being forced to seek refuge from Badr's displeasure in the desert. Ibn Karawayas was one of his detractors at the court of Badr.
100. This patron resided in Antioch where the poet went

after his retreat in the desert. Badr's death made his return to city life possible for the poet. Line 20, sun-na, religious custom in Islam. Line 42, Hadham, a mountain in Arabia.

101. The grandmother's death occurred in 329 when the poet was 26 years old.

103. Line 33, izar, a light garment.

104. Line 25, Adnan, ancestor of the Arabs.

105. This patron seems also to have been a resident of Antioch. Line 24, nun, letter of the Arabic alphabet.

106. This man, according to Blachère, was in the chancellery of the Ikshid of Egypt whose forces in 330 entered Aleppo. This was made possible by the assassination of Ibn Raiq, the Caliph's Emir of Emirs.

107*. This man was also one of the Ikshid's men. His father may have been governor of Antioch.

107. There are two number 107's in the text. There is no number 194. Line 26, the commentator sees satire as well as praise. The same is true of other lines. Line 38, the verses are:

My heart is split
 My tooth pulled out
 My wits darkened
 I love without return
 O darling coquette fawn
 Like a rising moon
 I saw him in his tent
 As the moon progressed
 I said: Fine, fine, fine, fine!
 Go, vile one, he said to me
 Come, get on, get on
 Be off and be off!
 Put it in my hand and mouth
 Until I let you come down.

109. This man was one of the Ikshid's men who became governor of Damascus.

111. Another of the Ikshid's men. He was son of the patron to whom poem 97 is dedicated.

112. This patron was the young nephew of the Ikshid. The latter died suddenly in 334. The nephew's court was at Ramla in Palestine. Line 32, according to Blachère the Alids of Tiberias quarreled with the poet and attempted to assassinate him.

113ff. Another series of poems of structural importance to the Diwan.

135. See note to poem 241.

137. Tahir treated the poet with great respect in spite of the hostility which the poet aroused in other members of Muhammad Tughj's court. Line 13, Kafr Aqib seems to be a village near Tiberias. The Sudanese may have been hired to assassinate the poet. The claimants are the Alids who pretend to be descendants of the prophet. Line 21, descendants of the prophet's daughter Fatima. Line 26, Tihami, the prophet as a dweller on the west coast of

Arabia. Line 29, Nasibis were enemies of the Alids.

140. This man was the governor of Homs when the poet was imprisoned there in 324. Now in 336 he was governor of Tripoli as the poet passed through the city on his way to Antioch. He was arrested by Ishaq with orders to compose a panegyric on him. The poet refused and escaped by retreating to Damascus and hiding there. Ishaq's assassination allowed him to proceed to Antioch. Line 3, Magians were accused of incest. Line 27, Safra, Ibn Kaigalag's wife. Line 30, the patron to whose court the poet was journeying. Line 36, Ibn Kaigalag was of Turkish origin.

145. This patron was the cousin of Saif al Daula who was to be the poet's chief patron. His family was Arab and stemmed originally from Mosul. Abu Ashar was governor of Antioch at this time. Line 16, the horse on which Muhammad is said to have made the night journey to heaven.

149. Line 6, Ashar means tribe. Line 28, a place as distant as China.

159. This poem refers to an assassination attempt made on the poet by Abu Ashar. See poem 193.

160. Saif was to be the poet's patron for nine years. He had already assembled a large entourage of poets, philosophers, astronomers, historians, philologists and other learned men in his court. A library of 10,000 books was at their disposal. Payment was munificent. In addition to estates, slaves, horses, etc. the poet is said to have received the equivalent of about \$300,000 in four years. It was at this time that he married and a son was born to him. Barzuia was a Kurdish fortress that was taken by Saif.

164. Abu Wa'il was a cousin of Saif al Daula. He was governor of Homs when he was captured by a Carmathian leader named Ibn Hirrat al Rawad (Son of cat and the ashes). Blachère remarks that he was to some extent in the poet's position fifteen years earlier. He was killed in the encounter and Abu Wa'il was seriously injured.

165. Nasser had been beaten by the Persian Buyyid prince who was sultan of Bagdad. The projected battle did not occur.

167. Line 30, the poet had one son whose name was Muhas-sad.

174. Abu Wa'il died as a result of wounds received when he was kidnapped and rescued as mentioned in poem 164.

180. Line 4, Awasim refers to the area between Aleppo and Hamah.

182. The Muezzin calls believers to the Muslim prayer service.

184. Line 34, the wall of Mayyafariqin actually did fall on the evening after this poem was recited.

186. This expedition against the Byzantines was one of Saif al Daula's most famous. It is said he led 30,000 men. Semandu is in Byzantine territory. The Khalij is the Bosphorus. The raid ended disastrously and Saif slaughtered his prisoners and retreated in disorder. The poet was an

eyewitness to these events.

187. Line 17, the Domesticus was the Byzantine commander-in-chief. Line 24, Bardas Phocas was the Domesticus.

188. This poem was recited to build morale in the troops who were threatened by a force of 40,000 men under Bardas Phocas.

193. It is said that Abu Firas, Saif's cousin, complained that al Mutanabbi was overpaid at the rate of 3000 dinars for three qasidas in a year. This poem was recited before Saif who had lent an ear to a clique hostile to the poet. Lines 6ff. raised a storm in their allusion to the defeat of Saif in the raid described in poem 186. Abu Firas, himself a considerable poet, accused him of plagiarizing line 13 and other poetic faults.

196. The mim rhymed qasida is poem 193.

197. Line 22, the Time of Ignorance was the period before Islam.

201. The Sheik al Missis was the master of drinking.

204. The letter concerned the release of prisoners held by Saif.

219. Line 12, sin, sign of the future tense in Arabic.

222. The envoy's name was Paul Monomachus.

224. The verses were by Muhammad ibn Sa'id the Katib.

226. It is said that the Byzantine force numbered 50,000 men, a very large number for these times. Line 13, grammatical sign to indicate the jussive mood. Line 19, the constellation of Gemini.

233. Al Nabigha, one of the best known pre-Islamic poets.

234. Saif did not acquire his honorary title until after this poem was composed.

236. The oath refers to the Byzantine general's pledge to the Emperor that he would put a stop to Saif al Daula's raids. He failed to do this. The name of the Patricius was John Tzimichus arabicized as Shamushqiq. Line 12, the Byzantines suffered a defeat here in which they lost 7000 men.

238. Line 6, the Jezirah is between Iraq and Syria. Line 9, Falata is a substitute name. Her real name was Khawla.

241. The break with Saif came during an assembly when the poet and the grammarian Ibn Khalawaih were discussing language. The poet pressed his advantage too far and taunted his opponent with his Persian origin. At this point Ibn Khalawaih struck him with a key and blood flowed from his face. Saif refused to redress this wrong and al Mutanabbi was allowed to withdraw to Damascus in the beginning of 346.

From there he went to Ramla where he composed poems 135-136. From there he went to Egypt where another former patron Ibn Rudhbari (poem 109) was situated. Kafur, his chief patron there whose name means camphor (with an allusion both to its smell and its whiteness), was much more powerful and wealthy than Saif. His other name Abu Musk means father of musk. His gifts to the poet included some 20,000 dinars in cash and in addition much beside. He did not, however, grant the poet a governorship as the poet

claimed he should. Egypt in Arabic is Misr which has the further meaning of populated place as contrasted with more sparsely settled areas of the Middle East.

242. Kafur was a Nubian slave. Line 6, he worked for an oil merchant before he was freed by the Ikshid. The satires were not made public until the poet left Egypt.

245. Line 19, two slaves were gifts of Kafur. Line 31, Hiran, a lake in Syria.

248. Line 27, Dailami, Turks. Line 29, Muqattam, hills near Cairo.

250. The poem refers to a plot which attempted to overthrow Kafur on behalf of the Ikshid's son Onagur. Line 20ff., stock examples of rebellion that failed.

254. Shabib was a bedouin who was Kafur's governor in Damascus. His rebellion ended when he died accidentally. Line 6, Qais represents the northern Arabs who were enemies of the southern Yemeni who, in turn, were makers of fine swords.

256. Line 39, the two words sound alike in Arabic.

257. Line 1; references to Kafur as a barber.

261. Arafat, one of the stations for pilgrims at Mecca and so the name for one of the festivals involved in the pilgrimage.

263. This episode occurred at Tabuk in Hisma where the poet stayed about a month on his way from Egypt.

266. The poem makes a joke of the deception caused by a mirage.

267. The places mentioned in the poem are on a line due east from Cairo to Kufa since the poet did not dare to go through the settled places of Palestine or Syria for fear of Kafur. Line 30, Ibn Hinzaba, Kafur's wazir whom the poet refused to write for.

269. Abu Shuja, like Kafur, was a slave raised to eminence by the Ikshid. He was of Greek origin and noted for his military boldness, whence his name Majnun, the mad one. Shuja and Fatik also suggest boldness. Line 34, h-m-d are root letters for the Arabic word for praise.

270. Line 12, daughters of Awaj are fine horses. Line 30, punishment for thieves included cutting off the hands. The Tuba or successor was the title for Yemeni kings.

272. The City of Peace is Bagdad. Line 13, the time of ignorance is the time before Islam. Line 22, said to be a reference to al Muhallabi, the wazir of Muizz al Daula whose patronage the poet refused during his stay in Bagdad.

273. Thabba was a bedouin leader of the Carmathians who were planning to attack Kufa at the time the poet was staying there after his return from Bagdad.

274. The poet had taken part in the battle which preceded the arrival of Dillar, the sultan's man to put down the Carmathians.

275. Ibn Amid was the wazir of Rukn al Daula, the Persian Buyid prince who ruled northern Persia. Arrajan was the summer residence of the wazir. He was said to be the best letter writer of the age. His gifts to al Mutanabbi amount

- to 50,000 dinars plus much beside during his three month stay.
277. Line 27, Amid in Arabic means column or support.
- Line 38, verses are compared to horses because the rhythm suggests their movement.
279. Line 31, a burdah is a striped cloak. Line 32, the Mahdi is a leader guided by Allah.
280. Adud al Dawla was the Buyyid ruler of southern Persia with his capital at Shiraz. He was the most lavish of the poet's patrons giving him in less than a year over 200,000 dirhams plus many other gifts.
281. Sha'ab Bewan is considered one of the four Edens of the world by the Muslims. Line 10, an Arab dish of broth and bread. Line 13, city on the way to Shiraz. Line 22, Adud in Arabic means forearm. Line 45, adding the letter ya to a word makes it a diminutive in Arabic.
282. Shiraz is known as the city of roses.
283. Wahsudan was a Kurd conquered by Adud's father, Rukn al Dawla.
284. The aunt was the sister of Rukn al Dawla.
285. Lines 21 and 47, again allusions to Adud's name. Line 32, had ending in the letter dal means leader of army, han ending in the letter nun means death.
286. Line 6, names of horses. Persia, fars in Arabic, has the same root letters as the word for horse. Line 7, the Qufs were a Kurdish tribe that Adud al Dawla put down. Line 43, mountains in Arabia.
287. The poet and his son on their return from Shiraz were killed by bedouin led by Fatik ibn Abu al Jahl, an uncle of the Thabba attacked in poem 273. The motive was both revenge and robbery. The poet was 50 years old. Line 22, a village near Kufa where the poet had left his wife and household. Line 23, name of a camel. Line 25, names of wood used for toothpicks. Line 39, ninth month of the year.